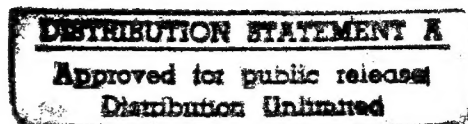


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11 June 1984

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ETHIOPIA

ERITREAN FRONT OPERATIONS, EXISTENCE DETAILED

Paris LE FIGARO MAGAZINE in French 12 May 84 pp 134-146

[Article by Jean-Francois Deniau in collaboration with Olivier Michel, photographs by Jean-Luc Manaud: "Eritrea: At the Front With the Soldiers of the Night"]

[Text] Jean-Francois Deniau, seen here with the military and political leaders of the "Liberation Front Fighters," spent 2 weeks deep in the heart of Eritrea on the Nakfa front with the resistance fighters who for 20 years have been struggling against the powerful Ethiopian Army, which today is supported by the Soviets. This report is a very special piece of documentation.

Some people in this world enjoy freedom through no efforts other than those already made by previous generations. That is the real luxury that we in France and in the West enjoy. But for the majority of people freedom is denied. A number of them are struggling to obtain it, each in its own way, on its own terrain--jungle or pebble-strewn land, marsh or mountains--, with its own vocabulary, weapons, and ideas. But always struggling for the right to be themselves. Andre Malraux recounted how in a Teruel trench he met a soldier who had not eaten for 2 days or slept for 3 nights. He was dressed in rags, covered with mud, and crawling with vermin. Malraux asked him, "What are you here for?" The answer: "For dignity." The difficult, faraway, obscure struggle of these people is sometimes ignored. They are fighting for themselves, but their fight is also our fight. Freedom is not divisible. That is why I really wanted to go and be alongside them in their country and tell about it. In order for any resistance movement to survive it needs means for subsistence, weapons, and hope. The last of these is not always the least necessary. And there is no hope in the silence of others.

In a short while it was going to be nighttime. Only the tops of the cliffs surrounding the dried-up stream bed were still red. In the front rank were the machine guns, one per company, and the RPG Rocket-Propelled Grenade rocket

launchers. Four hundred Eritrean People's Liberation Front [EPLF] fighters were assembled in orderly fashion. They had no uniforms but were a picturesque medley of field service jackets, short pants, blue jeans, turbans, and old bush hats. At their waists were ammunition and two locally manufactured Chinese-model offensive grenades. Slung over their shoulders or around their necks were the traditional "foutah," which no Eritrean ever takes off and which serves as overcoat, bedsheet, blanket, or umbrella for them. About a quarter of them were women, dressed like everyone else, armed like everyone else. The skin coloring was of every shade, from very light-colored mat complexion, to colors ranging from the color of copper to the color of burnt bread--which are the colors of their mountains--, to deep black. They had one characteristic in common: their ages were between 18 and 25. The fighters took off their hats and observed a minute of silence with their heads bowed. This was the pre-attack ritual. I know of no other example in another army of so moving a symbolic gesture, a gesture even more moving perhaps than our minute of silence later on, much later on, as homage to the dead. Then, brandishing their Kalashnikov's, they shouted in unison, "Victory to the masses!" They won that battle. They captured other Kalashnikov's, Soviet machine guns, Soviet 122 mm guns, a half dozen Soviet T-35 tanks, some Soviet heavyweight Zil trucks, and hundreds of prisoners. But it would not be the final battle. They are used to that. For 23 years they have been fighting for the independence of Eritrea. Twenty-three years, and what ups and downs . . . Marxists to begin with, they were supported by the USSR and its friends. But today it is the Soviet Union with which they are in direct conflict. Their history is worth recalling, since it is so special and also such a good example of the complicated interplay of the great powers, the tragedies of this world, and the courage of a people--a history that runs from the corridors of New York to a trap in East Berlin.

In 1950 the UN established a federation of the Ethiopian Empire and the former Italian colony next door, based on the advice of the English and the Americans. Eritrea, a land of stark desert along the Red Sea, pastoral savannah in the interior, and imposing, jagged mountains in its central region, has only very little by way of resources. And Ethiopia needed access to the sea. For the Allies it was a matter of giving a gift to and consolidating the power of the negus, Emperor Haile Selassie, "fascism's first victim." But the people of Eritrea were not truly consulted, contrary to the promises which had been made. The federation wasn't working out well, and Ethiopia soon did away with it by incorporating Eritrea into the empire. The United States and Israel supported the emperor in his conflict with the resistance fighters of the various liberation fronts. The USSR and its satellites supported the resistance fighters against Ethiopia. In the underground shelters where EPLF militants live one can still find old yellowed posters from that period on which a brawny Eritrean fighter is squashing a sinister Uncle Sam whose

dollars are dropping from him. Also practically everywhere in the Third World the language of the time was resolutely anti-American, anti-Western, and consistently opposed to imperialism, capitalism, colonialism and other "ism's" portrayed as the enemies of mankind. "Victory to the masses!"

But history was to produce change, and once again it was to produce change without consulting the parties concerned. In 1974 a military coup in Addis Ababa swept out the tottering government of the old emperor, undermined by the latter's own weaknesses and by the appalling drought which, it will be recalled, struck the whole area of Africa south of the Sahara in 1973. It was also undermined by the Eritrean war. Among the demands of mutinous Ethiopian soldiers were, of course, the demand not to polish their officers' shoes any more, and also the demand to no longer have to risk dying far from their homes, on foreign soil and without burial . . . The head of the new government in Addis Ababa, Colonel Mengistu, opted for revolution and the left. Faced with this new possible ally, the Soviets did not hesitate long. They dropped their friends in Eritrea, and also in Somalia where they were strongly established, in order to really play the Addis Ababa card.

The Eritreans did not give up. In fact, they liberated two-thirds of their land. They took Keren, and they surrounded the capital, Asmara, and the main port, Massawa. Everywhere the demoralized and poorly equipped Ethiopian Army retreated and shut itself up in its camps. It was autumn of 1977. Then an historic event occurred which undoubtedly no author of political fiction could have thought up. Eritreans from the different resistance movements and Ethiopian officials were summoned together to East Berlin. East Germany's boss, Mr Honecker, made known to them that he had been mandated by all the countries in the Soviet orbit, mentioning the USSR and Cuba by name, to put an end to the conflict. At the same time, the Eritreans were advised to go back under the aegis of Addis Ababa. Otherwise "not even the shadow of a tree will remain to protect you." These talks lasted months, the whole time in East Berlin.

But the Ethiopians maintained their stand of being opposed to any form of independence. Revolutionary Colonel Mengistu did not want to or was not able to appear less imperial than the old man he had had killed . . . And while these interminable Marxist discussions were going on, the USSR was rearming the Ethiopian Army on a massive scale with the most up-to-date and terrifying equipment including chemical shells. The USSR was sending thousands of "advisers"--Cubans, East Germans, and Soviets per se, including a goodly number of generals. From that time on, guns were to do the talking. The fighters of the EPLF had been duped and betrayed. They had to give up a lot of territory and practically all the towns they had captured, and they took refuge in their Sahel area hideout. Plus, in order to survive, the mountains. The mountains and the nighttime.

The Power of Night

We left just before dusk, and we drove for hours on one of those tracks of rock and sand that the EPLF has constantly kept on building in order to provide lines of communication within the liberated areas. Generally speaking the night protected us from the Ethiopian aircraft, the Soviet Mig-23's and Antonov's which were omnipresent and all-powerful during the daytime. But one can never take enough precautions. The rule was that the vehicles at the front drove with no lights and only the tail-end vehicle put its low beams on in order to put a little light at ground level on the indistinct line of the track under the wheels of the preceding vehicles. It was one o'clock in the morning. The convoy stopped in a stream bed with some scattered thorn bushes. Straightaway three shadows of resistance fighters appeared. Under a tree an inconspicuous electric bulb lit up a pipe and spigot which came barely a handful of centimeters up out of the ground--a buried and camouflaged gasoline depot. We filled up. A woman resistance fighter noted the vehicle registration and the amount of gas in a ledger. All lights were extinguished. The shadows disappeared in the dark and we set off again on our bumpy way in the night.

How often was that scene repeated? The entire liberated territory is organized that way, with underground depots of gasoline, ammunition, and even fresh water. Sometimes in front of some entrance hidden among the rocks we would be brought glasses of scalding tea, very black and highly sugared, which along with local pancake-shaped bread seems to provide the bulk of their subsistence.

In front of us the desert was like a beach, and behind us there were successive waves of mountain ridges compressed and made jagged by the wind. Out from a shelter of branches hidden under a thorn bush suddenly came some resistance fighters with their Kalashnikov's and their grenades. Night had arrived and, in a few moments, this landscape of death would be filled with intense activity. About 10 high-powered Soviet trucks taken from the Ethiopian Army and transformed into mobile workshops, repair trucks, and mobile forges emerged from the darkness and from shelter in nearby gorges. A garage the size of a small factory was set up in front of us for the night. People did welding, dismantling, and repair work. The latest prizes captured from the Ethiopian Army emerged from the darkness--tanks, front-wheel drive armored vehicles, Japanese jeeps. Out of three damaged tanks they made a combat-ready one. At dawn we went back through that place. Total silence had returned. There was nothing more than tire and tank tracks in the sand which sandstorms would soon blur and cover over.

If the resistance fighters don't have the nighttime for themselves, they dig themselves in and find another power of darkness in the power of being underground. I was in a hospital, underground and camouflaged, that has an

operating theater, a dentistry area, a pathology laboratory, a refrigerated plasma bank, etc. This hospital is well known among our fellow countrymen in Doctors of the World and Doctors Without Borders. I was in the EPLF headquarters, which is underground in a narrow valley; the entrance to it under the stones and bushes is not visible at 30 paces. I spent several nights underneath Nakfa, the dead city still in the center of fighting. Elsewhere, on flat land out in plain daylight I saw a whole battalion but only just as I was walking up on it, and the battalion was hidden under the meager vegetation that grows scarcely 1 meter high in the sand. Each man, under each bush, had dug his hole for the day. Each one was waiting with his Kalashnikov, his two grenades, his flask, and his "foutah." An Ethiopian colonel taken prisoner gave this explanation for his defeat: "The Front's fighters seemed to come out of the ground all over the place." They do come out of the ground.

So the EPLF has held up. By means of an austere political and social organization which covers both the front line and rear areas. By means of the courage and tenacity of a people. By means of the quality of its leaders, who are lean, have all been in combat, and among whom the oldest is 43. And in spite of the crushing superiority of the Ethiopian military's aircraft and other equipment. In spite of the massive assistance to the latter from the Soviet Union.

Currently the number of Soviet advisers serving alongside the Ethiopian Army is estimated at about 3,000. At first they were only on staffs but later they were in operations at the brigade level and now they are present at the battalion level. In no other situation in the world is Soviet military intervention so direct and does it involve so many personnel, apart from Afghanistan of course.

Just as the British Empire had the Gurkhas who maintained law and order for Her Gracious Majesty in India and the entire Commonwealth--Mrs Thatcher, in this latter part of the 20th century, was to send some of them off once again for the reconquest of the Falklands!--, the Soviets have found their Gurkhas in the Cubans. But the Cubans have preferred, with a goodly share of hypocrisy, to get out of the Eritrean sector and be assigned in the other combat area, the Ogaden, where Colonel Mengistu faces another resistance movement. As for the Soviet Union's other armed tentacle in the Third World, South Yemen, its highly emotional feelings on Eritrea have stemmed not only from the fact that it was a matter of fighting leftwing friends but also partly from the fact of their being Arab brethren. The Soviets absolutely do not want to lose the square Ethiopia occupies on the chessboard of world affairs--in the middle of the Horn of Africa, fronting the Red Sea and directly next door to the Arabian Peninsula--, a key space which dominates the whole region with its strategic position and its 30 million people. But in order for the Soviets not to lose it, then the price to be paid was for them to become directly involved themselves.

The Soviet Involvement

Eight hundred Soviet tanks (some given by Qadhdhafi), more than 100 armored M-24 helicopters, trucks, and more pieces of long-range and field artillery than can be counted (but which must be paid for!). And troops. In order to avoid losses and having colonels captured who can be shown to the press, the Soviet armored helicopters come in as soon as an Ethiopian unit gets in trouble and they evacuate Soviet nationals leaving the Ethiopians in the field to fend for themselves all alone . . . Cooperation is not easy. And in spite of the Soviet advisers, the Eritreans are advancing.

In an underground PC [command post] at tea time, in the middle of the night, I told the EPLF's principal military leaders a story that delighted the whole Near East a number of years ago. After the Six Days War, which inflicted spectacular defeat on the Egyptian Army that is not forgotten, the chief Soviet military adviser--let us call him Marshal Popov--is summoned before the USSR's Politburo in Moscow. The conversation is as follows:

"Comrade Marshal, you are a brave soldier. You are an impeccable communist. You are an eminent citizen of our Soviet homeland. None of all of that is in question. But could you be so kind as to tell us what on earth the advice was you gave the Egyptian Army that they were defeated in less than a week?"

Marshal Popov reacts indignantly: "I have nothing to reproach myself with; the advice I gave was the best."

"But what did you say, Comrade Marshal?"

"It was the best advice, I tell you. The advice proven by centuries of experience in our army. The advice in accordance with the traditions of our great general staff. The advice confirmed by the most recent experiences."

"But what did you say, Comrade Marshal! What advice?"

"Retreat, retreat, retreat, and wait for winter."

In Eritrea it is not very likely that the Soviets are waiting for winter. What they are waiting for is something else. They are waiting for Ethiopia to have definitively swung over into the Soviet fold. All over in Ethiopia Soviet cadres, and not just military men, are already working toward that end. Constant pressure is being exerted on Colonel Mengistu for him to take a decisive step--to organize his government on the basis of a communist party affiliated with that of Moscow. When Chernenko just received Colonel Mengistu in the Kremlin, he very bluntly reminded him about that. For the USSR that step is the sign of its ascendancy being irreversible.

For the 10th anniversary of the Ethiopian revolution next September, Colonel Mengistu wants a decisive military victory over Eritrea. The Russians are promising it to him if they are themselves able to win over Ethiopia. Meanwhile, the fighting which continues to go on is useful to the Russians. The Eritreans have only one solution left: to attack.

It is no longer guerrilla activity; it is war. From a frontline trench I witnessed the start of the new Eritrean offensive. No longer was H-Hour at night; it was at 1500, in broad daylight. In front of us was the plain. The one-eyed woman fighter commanding the platoon spoke to her troops in a soft voice--so soft--a girl's voice. Everyone was called by his first name: Petrus, Paulus, Salomon, Michel, or Abdallah. There were nicknames as well. One injured woman returned to the front chose "Thatcher," as in England's "Iron Lady." Her neighbor chose "Vatican" even though he is of Muslim extraction, because he liked how it sounded. There are no ranks. Just as in the Chinese Army one recognizes officers by the number of pockets in their jackets (and the number of pens in their pockets). Here the only external sign of a "superior" is a pistol in a belt. We exchanged cigarettes, a rare commodity. For reasons of economy (one package costs US\$3), the EPLF eliminated the 3 cigarette per day ration after explanations and voting.

Behind us an Eritrean 122 mm battery provided support for the advance of the resistance fighters. The Ethiopian batteries responded, but they were long and the shells passed whistling over our heads. The next day the Ethiopian aircraft took advantage of a very clear sky and fought back in its turn, causing the Eritreans some difficulties; and a Mig-23 was shot down.

Can the Eritreans win? Moving from guerrilla activity to war, from the mountains to the plain, from nighttime to daylight is never easy. They are determined to do so. There is already 300 km of continuous front line, with trenches and underground earthworks (guerrilla activity is kept up but that is further away, behind Ethiopian lines). Winning the war is no longer just a matter of courage and organization but is also a matter of equipment. It is no longer only the issue of the EPLF as opposed to Colonel Mengistu; it is the issue of the future of Ethiopia and of the region, of its situation in relation to East and West.

The EPLF claims to be non-aligned. It has some good reasons for doing so . . . Asked about their current beliefs the EPLF leaders answer that they are "certainly socialist, but resolutely independent." Their original vocabulary has been discreetly set aside without being repudiated. They have simply added an "s"--now it is "imperialisms" with an "s" which are the enemy.

The EPLF is alone. It deserves to be alone no longer. Regarding the Ethiopians, for whom I naturally have great sympathy--for them there do exist solutions other than military ones for settling the conflict.

If Colonel Mengistu were to happen to read these lines, I would like for him to ponder that comment. A victory for him, in opposition to Eritrea's independence, could only be achieved at a price, and it's a very high one--the definitive loss of Ethiopia's independence. Just as there is a driving impetus for freedom, there is a linking process leading to servitude.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

1. p 134. Death Without Burial

As guerrilla activity has moved down out of the mountains it has become war. Although the EPLF fighters do take very proper care of the Ethiopian wounded, they leave dead enemy bodies where they are because of the traditional Ethiopian fear of dying without burial.

2. p 136. The Road to the Sea

From a frontline trench, Jean-Francois Deniau watches the advance of the resistance fighters. A battery of Soviet 122 mm field artillery captured from the Ethiopians supports the offensive. The gunnery officer is a woman, as are nearly 30 percent of the EPLF fighters. The most recent offensive enabled the EPLF to gain a broad stretch of access to the Red Sea in the Northeast. A resistance fighter enjoys the pleasures of the beach; another keeps watch, with his Kalashnikov.

3. p 138. They Live Underground and Fight at Night

The martyred city of Nakfa, symbol of the resistance and liberated in 1977. Three Ethiopian offensives have unsuccessfully tried to retake it. Nowadays the front line is only 6 km away. Underneath the phantom city and its sun-baked walls, there is another city, this one underground and invisible.

4. p 138. Command post, communications centers, hospitals--everything is buried underground to be protected from aircraft, the only sign being the ventilation hole. Inside, the quarters are decorated with amusing frescoes. Gasoline depots are also buried underground. Refueling from them is done at night. Traffic moves only at night.

5. p 139. The Offensive

Left: During the night a Soviet "Zil" truck captured from the Ethiopians brings troop reinforcements, men and women. The new offensive is to be the next day. A rocky peak dominates the Nakfa front. On the other side is the objective: the first ridge, still held by the Ethiopian Army, and the plain. It is not a matter of just gaining ground but also of getting as much Soviet equipment as possible: tanks, guns, vehicles of all kinds. The EPLF has no source of supply for weapons other than what it captures from the enemy.

6. p 140. Colonel Vassili (holding out a document), chief Soviet military adviser on the northeast front, in the Ethiopian officers' mess. The Ethiopian colonel at his side, their chief of staff, was to be taken prisoner. It was in his kit that these "souvenir photos" were recovered. Folk tradition and psychological warfare . . . The Soviet Colonel Vassili is posing dressed up in traditional Ethiopian costume, in a straw hat and a big white smock, in order to please his hosts. "M-24" armored helicopters evacuated the Soviets. Abandoned were military and economic technical manuals in Russian and, of course, the inevitable bottle of "Moscovite" vodka. Jean-Francois Deniau was also to find scattered in the sand some photocopied courses in Marxism in Amharic for the use of Ethiopian officers.

7. p 141. In an imposing landscape a column of prisoners surrounded by EPLF fighters is led into a camp. The EPLF recently freed nearly 3,000 Ethiopian prisoners of war. There were too many of them . . .

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GHANA

DAILIES MARK 21ST ANNIVERSARY OF OAU

AB252119 Accra Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 25 May 84

[From the press review]

[Excerpt] Today marks the 21st anniversary of the founding of the OAU and in an editorial headed "Africa Is for Africans" the PEOPLE'S DAILY GRAPHIC notes that although the struggle for total African independence has been bitter and long the continent is truly witnessing the breaking down of the last vestiges of imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism. The paper reminds Africans that the stage reached is the hardest with the racist minority regime of South Africa resorting to other tricks such as the signing of accords with some frontline states, which are ostensibly meant to halt the armed struggle in southern Africa. For this reason Africa must not be deceived into thinking that the apartheid regime will relieve its hold on Namibia and give equal status to blacks.

In the opinion of the GRAPHIC, what African countries should do is rally behind SWAPO and the ANC, the two nationalist movements which are leading the fight for black majority rule in South Africa and independence of Namibia, to deal a final blow to apartheid. It stresses that peace as a precondition to development can only be assured in the face of the atrocities of a recalcitrant enemy such as South Africa through the intensification of the armed struggle. The paper therefore calls on all independent African states to continue to give full political, diplomatic, financial, and material support to the recognized liberation movements in southern Africa. Finally the GRAPHIC asks African states to remember that neocolonialism is still alive, Chad and Western Sahara are two clear examples which demand the united front to resist and defeat this other (?specter) of doom. Africa is and must be for Africans and it is only Africans who can make this come true.

CSO: 3400/1007

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEETING HELD IN ACCRA

Attorney General Addresses Meeting

AB271025 Accra Domestic Service in English 0600 GMT 27 May 84

[Text] The attorney general, George Aikins, says the strict measures taken by the government to deal effectively with criminals show that the PNDC [Provisional National Defense Council] is totally against inhuman practices. The accusation against the government of violating human rights are therefore based on the wrong impression that whatever happens in the country must be the direct responsibility of the government in power.

Mr Aikins, who is also the secretary for justice, was delivering the keynote address at the annual general meeting of the Ghana branch of Amnesty International in Accra yesterday. He said all the inhuman activities including torture, kidnapping, killing and the disappearance of persons in the community have for some time past been spearheaded by some reactionaries including some misguided supporters of the revolution.

On capital punishment, Mr Aikins said though this has not been abolished, there are no summary or arbitrary executions and that every sentence of death is authorized by law. The attorney general said the government has also shown concern about the poor conditions in the prisons and there are no political prisoners in the country. People detained at the beginning of the 31 December revolution, who are still being kept, are being investigated for specified offenses and will soon appear before the public tribunal. Among those still detained are Mr Riley-Poku and Kankam da Costa, who were investigated for malpractices involving the procurement of defense equipment amounting to 6 million cedis.

Newspapers on Organization's Position

AB281135 Accra Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 28 May 84

[From the "Press Review"]

[Text] The GHANAIAAN TIMES calls on the Ghana branch of Amnesty International to send a message to headquarters to be realistic and discard its unhelpful prejudices on what it calls (?handbag) values in order to gain credibility and respect in Ghana. Commenting on the annual general meeting of the Ghana branch of the organization, it says from the facts and arguments by speakers

during the meeting, the Ghana branch of Amnesty International should have a lot to send to its headquarters because the organization has been at fault in judging the revolutionary process in the country.

The TIMES is of the opinion that either by design or as a reflection of its general absurdity of looking at the concept of human rights, the organization's attitude toward the revolutionary process has been (?lodged) with prejudices. Amnesty has been concerned only about the have's and not the have not's. The paper points out that the procedures and other factors prejudicial to the administration of justice, which (?cut) heavily against the ordinary man, still persists in the conduct of the normal courts. These shortcomings have been exposed by the positive differences between the courts and the tribunals. However, says the paper, Amnesty International is yet to point out the contrast between the tribunals and the normal courts. Amnesty's (?perforced) concern for human rights, which is opposed to the death sentence, and fate of people facing trial or convicted without thinking of the harm suffered by the victims is difficult to understand. The Ghana branch of the organization is aware of the revolutionary process and does not need to be on the defensive over human rights.

CSO: 3400/1007

MALAWI

JAPAN TO PROVIDE AID FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Blantyre DAILY TIMES in English 4 Apr 84 p 4

[Editorial: "Grant Stresses Agricultural Importance"]

[Excerpts] IT WAS learnt this week that Malawi is to receive a grant of about K1.16 million from the Japanese Government to be used for purchasing fertilisers and chemicals to boost agricultural production.

The agreement formalising the grant was signed in Nairobi, Kenya, by Malawi's Ambassador based in Nairobi, Mr. M. W. Machinjili on behalf of the Government of Malawi, and Mr. Kazuo Murakami on behalf of the Japanese Government.

The provision of the grant for stepping up agricultural production is a laudable gesture which conforms with Malawi's priority needs.

The Japanese Government's grant to aid agricultural development is another indication that Malawi's efforts in agriculture continue to attract international admiration and recognition.

CSO: 3400/995

BRIEFS

FABRIC MANUFACTURE--TO CONTINUE with their programme of launching the polyester/cotton fabrics, David Whitehead and Sons were in Zomba on Monday night, where they held "an all round-the-clock" fashion show in the Great Hall. Speaking at the show, the general manager of the company, Mr. N. Rutherford said the completion of the company's K20 million project will help in saving some K46 million in foreign exchange in the country. [Excerpt] [Blantyre DAILY TIMES in English 15 Mar 84 p 3]

SOLAR HEATER MANUFACTURE--SOLAR heaters will soon be made in Mzuzu, Brown and Clapperton Northern Regional manager, Peter Arden has disclosed. This new development comes about as a result of the establishment of an engineering division for the company in Mzuzu. The new premises which B and C has been occupying since November 1, 1983 were previously occupied by the engineering department of Mandala, which has since ceased operations in Mzuzu, leaving only a spares shop. According to Mr. Arden, solar heaters have in the past nine months been manufactured in the Blantyre and Lilongwe workshops and sales have been encouraging. And with the establishment of the Mzuzu engineering division, the Blantyre and Lilongwe workshops will be concentrating on bigger machinery. [Excerpt] [Blantyre DAILY TIMES in English 15 Mar 84 p 4]

NEW SUGAR EXPORT ROUTE--MALAWI is for the first time taking concrete steps to make Lake Malawi a viable new alternative for its exports, a senior transport analyst said yesterday. A harbour is to be constructed at Dwangwa in Nkhotakota to take care of sugar and other exports which are suffering from long delays in reaching foreign markets. A spokesman of Malawi, Railways, the statutory body charged with commercial movement on the lake, confirmed that construction of a jetty at Dwangwa was afoot. He said, however, that consultations in obtaining construction gear were being completed. He said the jetty would serve as a connecting point in a lake route that would go through Chilumba and onward to Mbeya to join the Tanzanian road and rail network. The need for a northern trade route for Malawi to supplement existing ones was highlighted at the recent aid donors' conference in Blantyre. With one voice, the donors urged for steps to secure more routes for the country's goods and pointed to the need to open up the north as a transport alternative. [By Jonathan Kuntambila] [Text] [Blantyre DAILY TIMES in English 15 Mar 84 p 1]

FPLM TAKES ACTION AGAINST BANDITS IN CHIBABAVA

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 4 May 84 p 16

[Text] In Chibabava, Sofala Province, 29 bandits were killed and several others taken prisoner by the Armed Forces of Mozambique-FPLM, during military offensives that have been under way since March of this year, which have made possible the annihilation of five enemy groups, specifically those in the areas of Chitoconue, Nhamboa, Nhango, Chissequera and Marombe.

Also during the continued operations by the FAM/FPLM, various kinds of ordnance, including AKM type weapons, 60 mortar and antitank mines, machine guns, small boats and ammunition, some of South African origin, were seized, and several ivory tusks were also recovered. Nearly 150 families were liberated as well.

The chief of staff of the FAM/FPLM Fifth Brigade in Sofala, Capt Henrique Avelino Canxixe, who disclosed this information to us in Chibabava, said that pursuit activity is under way against the main bandit groups, for the purpose of restoring calmness to that section of the province.

Our source also noted that the armed bandits lately have not had any camps in Chibabava, and are constantly fleeing, in an attempt to escape the punitive action of the armed forces stationed in that area.

"During the past few days, the armed bandits have not had any camps. Many of them are hiding out in their relatives' homes, or else are infiltrating the population. Therefore, we can claim to be convinced that they have no fixed location, and are constantly in flight." This comment was made by Capt Henrique Canxixe, chief of staff of the FAM/FPLM Fifth Brigade in Sofala, while speaking to a team from the national information service.

DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE experienced from close range the military situation in Chibabava, where, among other news coverage assignments, it witnessed "on site" part of the action of the Armed Forces of Mozambique-FPLM in that part of Sofala, as well as the local population's involvement in the battle against armed bandits.

The source added: "Insofar as you are concerned, I think that comment will be unnecessary, once you have had an opportunity to witness one of the confrontations between our forces and a group of bandits seeking food. The bandit only surprises us, but lacks the capacity to confront us, and I think you will observe this."

Those Recovered Want More Support

The families recently recovered from the bandits, whose total number is 1,000, need more support in the form of food and clothing, to cope with the specter of hunger that still hovers over the children (the main victims of malnutrition), and also to eliminate nakedness.

In this connection, Captain Canxixe told us: "We are often forced to divert the soldiers' rations to help the rescued families. Most of the population that we are discussing shows a high rate of malnutrition, and we cannot allow them to die of hunger. During this phase wherein our activities are having major effects on the local life, we think that the authorities responsible for supplies should pay more attention to this situation."

Meanwhile, reports obtained by our reporter from some of those rescued indicate that many families have already started clearing the jungle to open up collective farms. Specifically, it is intended to start the second season production, such as that of vegetables, for example.

"One of our great concerns now that we are freed from the armed bandits is starting food production. Since we won't have time now to plant grains, we are considering producing squash, nhemba beans and kale. Our greatest problem lies in the lack of seed." This disclosure was made by the Nguézimane couple, who were recently rescued by the FAM/FPLM.

Moreover, it should be stressed that all the released families are being organized into communal villages, for the purpose of organizing them better for production. One of the goals of their organization in types of collective living is to study the method for backing them with consumer goods and production facilities.

Political Instructors Mobilize the Population

Other reports obtained by our team of reporters in Chibabava indicate that political instructors from the Armed Forces of Mozambique/FPLM are engaged in the mobilization of the rescued families, aimed at their improved organization for agricultural production and collective living.

One of the FAM/FPLM political instructors contacted by DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE was Fernando Taibo Beruca, from the First Company of the 505th Battalion, currently serving in the Hatongua District in Muxungue, who commented: "The political work with the rescued population is a priority."

Fernando Beruca stressed, in connection with the work that is under way with the recovered population: "The population must be liberated ideologically too, because we think that without this activity, they cannot understand our current realities, and the purpose of our struggle to physically eliminate the armed bandits. Thus far, we have been making progress on our political front."

This latter activity involves not only the political instructors, from the Armed Forces of Mozambique/FPLM, but also the party entities in some sections of Chibabava District, outstanding among which, among others, are the dynamizing groups in that part of Sofala Province.

2909

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CAHORA BASSA ENERGY TO REACH GAZA PROVINCE BY JUNE

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 5 May 84 p 3

[Text] Xai-Xai (Agency)--Gaza Province will start benefiting from the Cahora Bassa energy early in the second half of this year, specifically, in June, if there are no problems in the execution of the plan. The first power stations to generate the energy from Cahora Bassa will be the two main operational areas existing in the province, those of Xai-Xai and Chokue.

The electrification of the other sections of the province will depend essentially on the completion of the electric substations under construction in the districts, noteworthy among which are those in Chicumbane (Xai-Xai District), Macie and Lionde, where high tension power transporting machinery will be installed.

The foregoing statements were made recently to our reporter in an interview granted by the Gaza provincial director of industry and energy, in which he discussed the main problems and prospects for the development of industry in this section of the country. And in this connection he told our newspaper that the modernization of the current energy system is a matter of concern to the authorities in this province, with a view toward improving and lending greater efficiency to the hospital services, as well as to all others in which this resource is essential.

The subject of our interview claimed that, based on the notion that industry is a dynamizing factor in the country's economic development, and in view of the fact that Gaza Province is essentially agricultural, there are at present several different agricultural development projects which are heavily dependent on timely backup from the industry and energy agency. In this context, our interviewee remarked: "At the present time, since we are undergoing a serious fuel shortage, the causes of which are more than well known, we are giving priority to the agrarian enterprises, in order to facilitate the plowing, harrowing and seeding during April, the second campaign season."

2909

CSO: 3442/375

PROVINCIAL INDUSTRY ADMINISTRATOR ON GAZA FISHING INDUSTRY

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 5 May 84 p 3

[Text] Milagre Mateus Mutemba told our reporter that Gaza's provincial directorate of industry and energy has a plan in the area of fishing which calls for the consolidation of the three pre-cooperatives already in existence, the reactivation of the centers shut down by the enemy's activity and the introduction of pisciculture into areas yet to be determined.

Last year, hundreds of tons of fish were caught in Gaza Province, in this province's various fishing centers, the largest of which are located in the districts of Massingir (Albufeira de Massingir), Chokue, Bilene Macie, Chibuto and Xai-Xai. Our source also remarked that several factors had caused meager fish production last year, the major ones being the drought, lack of lumber for boats and difficult access to the sea. In the latter respect, that official told us that there is a project to clean up the side of the lakes where fishing is being done at present. "We don't even fish off the coast of the Indian Ocean bordering our province, but rather in the lakes connected to the sea."

In discussing the formation of fishing cooperatives, the subject of our interview claimed: "That is a political process which is steadily continuing. The fishermen have shown a certain reluctance toward forming fishing cooperatives, because an updating of prices is still lacking." Gaza Province has a fishing potential which, when used to advantage, could improve the diversification of the population's nutritional diet and, in particular, become an inexhaustible source attracting foreign exchange, through exports of shrimp, which are very plentiful in the Zongoene lagoon (Xai-Xai District), owing to its excellent connection with the sea.

Commenting on the growth of industry as a whole, Milagre Mateus Mutemba said that Gaza Province is still heavily dependent on Maputo. "If we want to a part, we have to resort to Maputo." He added: "The Sogere Brewery Plant sometimes shuts down, not because of lack of raw materials, but because there are no containers for bottling the beverages." Milagre Mateus Mutemba thinks that the ceramics industry is the most developed one in the province, and has succeeded in meeting the population's needs completely.

2909

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SELF-DEFENSE COURSES UNDER WAY IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 9 May 84 p 2

[Excerpts] "You militiamen must work in cooperation with the defense and security forces in this locality of Nhangau." This comment was made by the first secretary of the city committee, Lourenco Jose Marra, in a speech closing the second self-defense course, delivered on Monday morning in Nhangau, on the outskirts of the city of Beira.

After demonstrating some combat techniques and tactics learned in the course, the participants submitted a message, in which they declared: "We are ready to liquidate the armed and unarmed bandits in our country. And we are ready to take part in any task requested of us to annihilate the armed and unarmed bandits."

Participating in the aforementioned course were charcoal makers, peasants, fishermen, members and officials from the OMM [Organization of Mozambique Women] and the OJM [Mozambique Youth Organization] and the population as a whole who, after 90 days of training, will be reinforcing the number of citizens trained to date in the locality of Nhangau.

The participants contributed the sum of 1,100.00 meticals to support the population recently liberated by the FPLM/FAM in the districts of Maringue and Gorongosa.

At the conclusion, cultural activities were held, as a sign of happiness at the completion of the course.

A course in self-defense involving all members of the local Saltworks Cooperative, merchants and the population as a whole concluded recently in the Maropanhe District of Machanga.

According to a source from the administrator's office, at the present time another self-defense course is taking place in Machanga as well, this one at the district headquarters, in which 280 persons from various fields of activity and places of residence are taking part. On the island of Chiloane, also in Machanga, a self-defense course for men and women, with active participation by 500 persons, was started a few days ago.

2909

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YOUTHS PARTICIPATE IN GONDOLA AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 9 May 84 p 2

[Text] For the 1984-85 harvest, which is approaching, the OJM [Mozambique Youth Organization] in Gondola, headquarters of the Chimoio District, has already cleared an area of 15 hectares to be used to grow corn. Everyone knows that the land was supposed to have been worked on during the current agricultural campaign, but this was impossible because of the shortage of fuel for the plowing.

According to a source from that organization, the same thing will not occur during this season, because the proper authorization has now been received to purchase fuel, as well as seed to be used for agriculture.

Concurrently, the OJM has a collective farm over an area of half a hectare, occupied by manioc planters.

Plans also call for the raising of small-sized animals, consisting of ducks during the first phase, with other species introduced later.

At the base, or more specifically in communal villages and districts, the respective secretariats have also started agricultural production which, in two communities, has resulted in the opening of collective corn farms the crop from which is currently being harvested.

All these activities, both by the district secretariat and that of the base, are aimed at raising funds for the OJM, by marketing the results accrued from production; and at the same time they are part of the implementation of one of the decisions of the Congress, to combat hunger.

Also on that production site in Manica, the young people have rendered assistance to the agricultural enterprises working on the hoeing and harvesting of corn.

Another activity that is under way is the motivation of the group to make bricks for the construction and improvement of the villagers' residential dwellings.

2909

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OJM SECRETARY GENERAL ON VARIOUS PROGRAMS INITIATED

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 9 May 84 p 4

[Text] Maputo (Agency)--The Mozambican youth, responding enthusiastically to an appeal from the Politburo of the FRELIMO Party's Central Committee, have already started implementing some of the programs devised in connection with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle for national liberation. This announcement was made by the OJM [Mozambique Youth Organization] secretary general, Zacarias Kupela, at a meeting held with native reporters. According to that official the programs marking Revolution Day, which include the patriotic education of youth, volunteer work, sports, cultural and recreational activities and socialist emulation, are to be carried out essentially by the student youth. He commented: "By giving priority to the educational institutions, we think that we shall succeed in including all the youth in the celebrations marking that date which, to us, will be recorded in the golden pages of our history."

With patriotic education, an effort is being made to have every young person love his fatherland and be ready to defend it at any time. In this context, Zacarias Kupela stressed that the students would receive the necessary politico-military training, and would be called upon to become increasingly involved in Compulsory Military Service, the local forces, the popular militias and the vigilance groups.

According to the OJM official, there are concrete examples of the students' participation in the defense of the fatherland, namely, in Inhambane, where, during the vacations, the students participated directly in the battles against armed banditry.

But patriotic education (a task incumbent on the whole society, and not just one particular entity) will not be limited to the mere training of students in self-defense. According to Kupela, visits will be arranged to sites destroyed both by the armed bandits and the Ian Smith regime, and South Africa. The bandits themselves will describe the crimes that they committed against the civilian population, and samples of ordnance captured by the Mozambican Army will be organized, as well as films shown on the armed struggle for national liberation. Kupela remarked: "We want our youth to hate the armed bandits increasingly and to participate with redoubled intensity in their total elimination"; giving a reminder that, under the new conditions created by the

Nkomati Accord, the youth of Mozambique will also have to heighten their vigilance, so as to prevent the bandits' infiltration among members of the populace.

Rebuilding of Infrastructures

With regard to the goals of the volunteer work and the manner of its execution, Zacarias Kupela said that brigades from the Mozambique Youth Organization would participate in rebuilding the infrastructures destroyed by the armed bandits, and would cooperate in the shipping of equipment, medicines and other materials, particularly to areas with difficult access. Other brigades will collect cigarettes, books, ball-point pens, notebooks and other items of use to our armed forces.

According to Zacarias Kupela, also in the area of volunteer work, the youth have expressed their availability and he cited the example of Sofala, whose youth offered to rebuild Maringue, and that of Manica, where the local youth are taking part in the rebuilding of the communal villages destroyed by the armed bandits, in the district of Sussundenga.

Kupela continued: "Furthermore, every base organ will have a concrete task to perform in this specific area."

The cultural and recreational program calls for an organization for get-togethers with the armed forces, and Kupela noted that some groups will be going to the country's different provinces as early as this month. He also said that the youth who distinguished themselves in the battle against the armed bandits would be introduced publicly, and that organizational activities are currently under way to attain that goal.

In the area of socialist emulation, the various educational institutions in the country will compete with one another, to select the school which has the best educational achievement, and the school which is the cleanest, and best decorated and has the best garden, in a process wherein skills will be revealed.

2909

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NEW COMMUNAL VILLAGES FOR BANDIT, FLOOD VICTIMS IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS

Chibabava District

Beira DIARIO DE MOCAMBIQUE in Portuguese 8 May 84 p 4

[Excerpts] A village to be turned over to the victims of the armed bandits has come into existence in Toronga, in Chibabava District, as part of the constant activity by the Armed Forces of Mozambique-FPLM stationed in that section of Sofala Province which, in addition to physically eliminating the criminals, are including the recovery of the population. This rural community, with nearly 200 families, is growing as more people are restored to freedom; while work is continuing to minimize the specter of hunger that still hovers over the villagers.

Another effort under way in the village of Toronga is associated with the cutting of wooden stakes and those of other materials to build more dwellings, because day after day more families are being taken into that community. Meanwhile, other villagers are involved in improving their property, something that actually represents the rebirth of a lost life.

"I cannot say exactly how many houses we have in the construction plan, because every day that elapses the Armed Forces of Mozambique-FPLM bring more families with them whom they have rescued in various parts of this Chibabava District. However, I can predict that this will be the largest village in this zone." This comment was made by Zacarias Nduma, secretary of the Toronga dynamizing group and in charge of those who are rescued.

Zacarias Nduma, who is also one of those rescued, commented, in addition: "Besides building new homes, some of us are involved in improving those already constructed. Some have already started building houses with two or three rooms; while others are improving the inside and outside appearance of their property. We are doing this because we never intend to leave here."

Also as part of the construction, some families in Toronga are producing bricks in order to build dwellings with better features. It is emphasized that all the houses are being built using local material, although the most efficient people have already installed lucite and zinc plating on the roofs.

Combating Hunger

Concurrently with the construction of housing, the families recently restored to freedom are involved in starting collective farms. Specifically, they are engaged in second season production, as part of the improvement in the nutritional diet and the effort to combat hunger.

Zacarias Nduma, in charge of the rescued people in Toronga, remarked: "There are some who arrived in time, such as I, for example; for I have been here since the end of last year. And they have managed to accomplish something with regard to producing corn and mapira. But nevertheless, we all intend to engage in producing vegetables."

A peasant woman named Roda Pitrosse who was contacted by our reporter cited the lack of seed as the main obstacle to combating hunger. She said: "We want kale, butter bean and 'nhemba' seed, as well as seed for other garden produce, in order to start the second season production."

A Brief History

Toronga is one of the most productive sections of Chibabava District. Watered by a vast plain on one of the banks of the Buzi River, its land is quite conducive to productive activities, as well as to raising livestock, such as goats, bovine cattle and sheep, for example.

Until mid-1981, the time of its complete abandonment, Toronga stood out as one of the richest sections of Chibabava; and, with the two communal villages built here, it also became one of the most heavily populated sections. It should be recalled that refugees from Zimbabwe also lived here during the war against Ian Smith.

Upon the intensification of the activity of the Armed Forces of Mozambique-FPLM, specifically, starting in mid-1983, Toronga was recovered and the construction began on the village for the rescued families, some of who were natives. An officer from the FAM/FPLM said: "To reconquer Toronga, we have to tighten our belts, because we have found obstinate bandits here."

Boane Area, Maputo Province

Maputo NOTICIAS in Portuguese 11 May 84 p 2

[Excerpts] Over 250 families evicted by the rain which devastated the Boane zone of Maputo Province at the end of January of this year are being settled in the future communal village of Campoane, in the locality of Matola-Rio. On Wednesday, this embryonic community as well as the 25 June community, located next to the state enterprise bearing the same name, were visited by Jose Molane, first secretary of the party and governor of Maputo Province, who learned on the site all the details regarding the construction of housing and social infrastructure for the villagers.

Any reader traveling along National Highway No 2, in the direction of Boane, would certainly notice, on the left side, just beyond Matola, a cluster of unfinished huts and field tents. From this still shapeless group of dwellings the communal village of Campoane will come into existence in the near future; and the party and government officials on the provincial levels intend to create all the social conditions required for the rehabilitation of those who, owing to the floods of the Umbeluzi River, had their homes and possessions destroyed by the water.

Those conditions include, during a first phase, backing for the construction of housing and social infrastructure, specifically, schools and health stations, and wells for the water supply.

Governor Jose Moiane was informed by an official of the future communal village, during his visit to the site: "The priority in the granting of plots of land as well as building materials will go to the families that were left with nothing because of the devastating effects of the water. Next will be the families were were evacuated from the low areas of the river."

In addition to these families, who currently number 250, according to the same individual, there have been requests from several other families residing in the cities of Maputo and Matola, to settle there.

The same source added: "At present, we have 30 requests for these facilities which, for the time being, have been held in abeyance so that we can deal with the first cases, which are the most urgent."

Covering a vast area, which is still in the phase of division into plots, the future village will have a capacity to house many families. This fact was attested to by Jose Moiane, who recommended to the district authorities the prompt construction of an elementary school, because there are several children of school age on the site.

132 Families in the 25 June Community

On the land adjoining the 25 June District, next to the enterprise of the same name, 132 families have already been settled; most of whom now have their own houses, although they are temporary.

During the visit paid by Governor Jose Moiane, the first secretary of the future communal village explained that the houses are being built temporarily with stakes and covered with thatch. "However, we have now started building permanent houses, which will be of brick."

According to him, the construction work on housing has proceeded at a good pace, and there are groups responsible for cutting stakes and other materials for the construction per se. Our reporter also noted that the construction of wells has already been started.

Nhamatanda District

Maputo NOTICIAS in Portuguese 5 May 84 p 3

[Excerpts] To settle the areas devastated by the armed bandits which have now been recovered by the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FPLM) in their military offensive is the current concern of the political and administrative authorities of Nhamatanda District, in Sofala Province. Hundreds of families rescued from enemy captivity have already been rehabilitated, since January of this year.

In statements made to our newspaper recently, the administrator of that district, Daniel Salipe Jacob, said that the Nhamatanda plan calls for the construction of communal villages in the southern part of the district, primarily in the Mecuzi region; on sites where the rescued population is starting to be concentrated.

The operations to receive the population have been conducted jointly by the political and administrative entities, with the participation of the health agency, which is giving special attention to children, most of whom appear to be in an advanced state of marasmus.

The administrator of Nhamatanda commented: "We do not intend to abandon the areas which were previously devastated by the armed bandits, because that would mean turning over the countryside to depopulation and allowing the enemy to regain its position."

In fact, as our reporter learned from the military stationed in Nhamatanda, as the offensive advances, the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FPLM), in coordination with the various district authorities, are encouraging security, so that the region may become livable and may again produce the corn, mapira and other products in which Nhamatanda is potentially rich.

At present, over 3,000 families rescued from the armed bandits by the FAM-FPLM during the course of the military offensive are concentrated in Nhamatanda District. During March and April alone, over 50 families were brought to the district headquarters by the FAM-FPLM, and are now awaiting their rehabilitation.

2909

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FURTHER ANALYSIS OF POST-COUP SITUATION PROVIDED

London AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL in English No 9, 25 Apr 84 pp 4-5

[Commentary: "Cameroun: Biya in the Balance"]

[Text] The violent coup attempt earlier this month has greatly weakened President Baul Biya's position. Unable to rely on the police or the presidential guard, he is now totally dependent on the army. The commander-in-chief of the armed force, Gen. Pierre Semengue, appears to remain loyal to Biya. And as was evident during the coup attempt, some of the key army units, including the parachute battalion, were seemingly unambiguous in their support for the government. But a lot of officers want Biya to be much firmer in his handling of the political apparatus he inherited from former president Ahmadu Ahidjo. They want heads to roll because of the coup attempt, and many want Ahidjo extradited from France.

To regain authority and preempt a coup, Biya might be tempted to dissolve the ruling Union Nationale Camerounaise (UNC) party. The battle between Ahidjo and Biya supporters (AC Vol 24 No 16 and No 20) is unlikely to disappear in the short-term. But by pushing Ahidjo supporters out of the UNC and the National Assembly, perhaps by abolishing both institutions, Biya might better persuade the armed forces that he is authoritative enough to remain president.

During the last three months public opinion in Cameroun shifted markedly against Biya, largely because he was seen to be indecisive, and too accommodating of the previous regime. When he announced the cabinet changes of June 1983, in which many key individuals in Ahidjo's regime were removed or reposted, there was widespread optimism that Biya would forge ahead with cleaning out the UNC of the ancien regime, and then, firmly in control, set about liberalising local politics. The discovery of a plot against the government in mid-August reinforced Biya's standing in the country. From then on, as he tried somewhat desperately to defuse north-south tension, by compromise, his position weakened.

Neither the extraordinary UNC congress last September, which formally sanctioned Biya's takeover from Ahidjo as leader of the one-party state, nor the January 1984 presidential elections, resulted in significant consolidation of Biya's power. Having thrown out a number of Ahidjo supporters in the June cabinet

change, it was expected that at least those who had been dismissed would similarly be eased out of the UNC politburo and central committee. Nothing happened.

The next crucial event in the decline of Biya's stature was the 18 November 1983 constitutional reform which allowed challengers in presidential elections. But the conditions of candidature made it practically impossible for an incumbent president to be challenged successfully: candidates have to get 500 signatures from the ranks of certain key public servants -- all of whom are chosen by the party and government, and are hence mostly loyal to the president.

It was then hoped that his formal "election" as president would result in a radical change of cabinet and other key government and party postings. The ousting of the Ahidjo oligarchy and its replacement by well-known, competent figures working in the national interest, was widely considered a prerequisite. In fact several ministers and senior functionaries from the previous regime remained in office. In March this year some of them appeared before the military tribunal in Yaounde. Quite obviously they had links, direct and indirect, with the plan to destabilise Biya. Those primarily accused by the government and the Yaounde tribunal were Ahidjo and his two closest colleagues, the former prime minister M'Bello Boura Miagari, and former minister of defence, Abdoulaye Maikano. Partly because few details about specific charges were made public, the affair was soon seen as a crude attempt to settle scores between the warring north-south factions. Thus, for example, the present minister of planning, Youssoufa Daouda, who had been accused of complicity in anti-Biya plots, was not among those in front of the tribunal.

Throughout the last seven months Biya has found it increasingly hard to define his objectives. There were many signs of strain: systematic police searches, the difficulty of getting exit visas, and for example the banning of some foreign journals. It also became apparent that a powerful group of the political class was opposed to any significant change in the running of the country. Composed of those from the south and centre of the country, this lobby is grouped around Biya's wife and includes Gen. Semengue, Philippe Mataga, Biya's cabinet director, Mbarga Nguele, the deputy cabinet director whose prime function is to keep an eye on the secret service (Direction de Documentation), and Henri Ombwa Damas, a businessman with close connections with the Biya family. To some extent the group is responsible for the paralysis of government prior to the coup attempt.

One of the main questions arising from the coup attempt is why the Garde Republicaine (the presidential guard) failed to oust the government. Then there are doubts about the extent of involvement in the coup attempt by the police and the secret service, both of which were well looked after by Ahidjo. We understand that if the coup had succeeded, the director general of the Fonds National du Développement Rural, Issa Adoum, was to have become head of state on the understanding that he would have brought into government a lot of young political aspirants representing most ethnic groups in the country.

That the coup leaders were unable to capture Biya or Semengue, or retain the complicity of key people in the army or spread the rebellion outside Yaounde, also remain unanswered questions. Conceivably Gen. Semengue, an extremely able tactician, played a double game with the plotters, pretending to go along with their plans but then squashing them on the day. During Ahidjo's presidency Semengue on more than one occasion managed to preempt plotters in this way. The announcement by Biya the day before the coup attempt that northern officers in the Garde Republicaine would be transferred, appears to have forced the plotters to strike immediately and almost certainly prematurely. It appears that Biya did indeed know of their plans (AC Vol 25 No 8).

CSO: 3400/997

NIGERIA

BANK OFFICIALS ARRESTED FOR NEW CURRENCY DEALS

Rivers State

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 3 May 84 p 1

Excerpt FIFTY-ONE bank officials in the Rivers State, who wanted to exchange old notes totalling ₦185,107 behind-the-counter were yesterday arrested.

A police spokesman told newsmen that the officials were apprehended in eight commercial banks following complaints from the public.

The Commissioner of Police then sent out a crack team of detectives to foil behind-the-counter currency deals.

All the suspects have made useful statements to the police and have been released on bail pending further investigations, he said.

And in Ibadan, Oyo State, police yesterday found ₦236,700 cash kept in a room at Felele Layout.

The money was recovered when police searched the house. A man is helping the police on the matter.

Reports reaching our desk yesterday said that the man, in a bid to avoid arrest, allegedly offered the police a ₦10,900 bribe and later increased it to ₦30,000.

A total of 88 second-hand vehicles of various brands were also said to have been found in the premises of the suspect who claimed ownership of the vehicles.

This list of impounded vehicles include 35 Datsun panel vans, 20 Volkswagen Kombi buses, 11 Datsun double cabin vans, two Bedford Tipper lorries, two Peugeot '404' station wagon, one '404' pick-up van and six Toyoto buses.

In Lagos, bank officials were yesterday subjected to a thorough search by securitymen in various parts of the Federal capital.

The officials were said to have been searched before going in and out of their respective offices.

The Daily Times understood that the search was to forestall any conspiracy of fraud.

Lagos Bankers

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 4 May 84 p 1

[Article by Jimmy Aderinokun]

[Text] ELEVEN bank officials in various banks in Lagos were yesterday arrested for trying to exchange more than N106,000 old notes for various persons.

A statement issued in Lagos from the Force Headquarters gave the breakdown as follows:

National Bank of Nigeria Marina Lagos--N10,485; ABC Martins Street, Lagos--N5,283; Pan African Bank Lagos--N10,035; ABC Surulere--N11,157,50; Union Bank Ilupeju--N20,320; Union Bank Marina--N5,500; Union Bank Oyingbo--N14,920; Union Bank Broad Street--N9,665 with six signed Union Bank cheques and six paying in slips already signed; IBWA Broad Street--N690.50 and First Bank Secretariat--N12,157.

The statement added that all the 11 bank officials arrested were helping the police in their investigations.

The police warned all bank officials and the public to desist from unacceptable exchange transaction.

CSO: 3400/957

PROBLEMS BETWEEN RELIGIONS, FEAR OF ISLAM NOTED

London AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL in English No 9, 25 Apr 84 p 7

[Text] NIGERIA: FAVOURED MUSLIMS. The recent decision by the Supreme Military Council to allow Muslims making the Haj to Mecca to take 800 Naira, has prompted a lot of criticism, not least from within the ranks of the armed forces. All other citizens are allowed only 100 Naira for foreign travel.

Non-Muslims have recently been alienated in a number of ways: the SMC abolished Easter Monday as a public holiday (Shagari's administration first proposed the idea) only to reinstate it after considerable pressure; there are moves afoot to restrict the consumption of alcohol; Islamic missions have been sent to purely Christian areas such as Anambra State; and attempts have been made to impose Muslim standards on non-religious institutions. For instance the Students Union of Sokoto University has been pressured by the university's Muslim Society to ban drinking and mixed-sex functions and entertainments. Nigeria, and even Sokoto, are secular--at least on paper.

Southern fear of growing Northern/Islamic domination is perceived in the difference in the treatment of ex-President Shagari and former vice-president Alex Ekwueme, Shagari, a Hausa-Fulani, has been held in comfortable house arrest; Ekwueme, an Ibo, had been in prison. There is great interest now in the handling of their cases by the military tribunals which have already been sworn in. Both will be tried in Lagos--but in camera, according to Brig. Paul Ufuoma Omu, chairman of the Lagos-zone tribunal. Indeed, all the tribunals are likely to be held in camera. In view of the massive corruption of which the former politicians are said to be guilty, the lack of openness is bound to be widely resented.

There is also criticism of decree No. 3--Recovery of Public Property (Special Military Tribunals)--on legal grounds. The SMC will act as a sort of higher court, which will have to vet all tribunal decisions. The chairman of each tribunal will be a military man, though judges have been appointed as ordinary members. The whole procedure is so questionable that it has created sympathy for the accused even among long-standing enemies of the Shagari administration. In London, a group calling itself Friends of Nigeria's Progressive Leftists, UK Chapter, has issued a strong condemnation of the decree.

In Nigeria it is less easy to make any sharp protests, though retired Gen. Ibrahim Haruna has vehemently attacked the harsh penalties laid down in the decree. The general who is retired, now heads a legal practice in Kaduna; he was recently tipped as next High Commissioner to Britain. The journalist who published the suggestion, Tunde Thompson of the Lagos-based Guardian, was then arrested. The Nigerian press--including that owned by the Federal Military Government--has become much more critical of the Buhari administration since the apparently inconsistent application of the new press laws. The military have been remarkably clumsy in handling the media, considering the influence which newspapers have with the Nigerian public, and the worsening image of the leadership in Lagos which journalists still manage to convey, despite the restrictions.

A further costly blunder was the SMC's refusal to recognise another powerful pressure group, the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). Minister of Education, science and technology, Ibrahim Abdullahi, maintains that all student associations were outlawed by the military government which preceded the Shagari administration, and told a delegation of the union which wanted to discuss the re-introduction of school fees that "as far as this administration is concerned, yours is an off-shoot of the banned NANS."

Less publicised but perhaps even more damaging to Buhari's security is the current drive to clean up the army and check defence contracts, Brig. Nassarawa, the Adjutant-General, (with the additional title of Custodian of Discipline) has instructed military finance officers to devise a uniform system of payment and allowances. (Many officers rely on allowances more than on their pay). An investigation into building contracts awarded by the armed forces and the ministry of defence since October 1979 was set up by defence minister Gen. Bali. It started work at the beginning of April, and is to submit at least an interim report before next month's budget. The investigation panel is headed by the permanent secretary in the ministry of defence, S. A. Ehizuelen, and has been charged with listing the contracts and the degree of their completion, reviewing major projects not yet completed, and apportioning blame and recommending penalties where work is judged to be shoddy or in case of financial discrepancies. Some members of the army feel that this is a political witch-hunt, though there is undoubtedly plenty of cause for the investigation.

CSO: 3400/996

BUHARI URGES CHURCHES TO EXPOSE 'WEALTH' LAW VIOLATORS

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 7 May 84 p 24

[Text] CHURCHES and other religious bodies must expose people who want to hide under their cloaks to preserve their ill-gotten wealth.

The Head of State, Major-General Muhammadu Buhari, threw this challenge to all religious organisations in the country at the week-end.

General Buhari said all churches and religious bodies must carry out a house-cleaning exercise, "as a first step in re-installing the essential role of ethics in every aspect of our lives."

The charge was contained in his goodwill message to the opening of a symposium on "Christian Work Ethics; Opportunities for application to business" held at the Presbyterian Church, Yaba.

He declared "all bad eggs who used the religious bodies to cover their ill-gotten wealth should be exposed."

General Buhari expressed regret that rather than use business to raise industrial manufacturing, manpower and technological experts in the country, it was being utilised to steal government money, embezzle contract fees, smuggle contraband and siphon the country's wealth to foreign bank accounts.

"Business has become an avenue to get rich quick" he added.

The Head of State contended that if all christian businessmen and their contemporaries in other religions had the fear of God and conducted their business in the true spirit of their religious injunctions, "all our business woes and other sharp business practices would vanish from the life-styles of Nigerians."

The address was read by Dr. Ndidì Chibogu, an assistant director in the Ministry of Information, Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture on behalf of the minister who was to have delivered the message.

In a keynote address, Mr. Kanu Oji, a member of the association that organised the symposium, called for the establishment of a national institute of professional ethics. He said that such an institute should be mandated to ensure that professional bodies operated in accordance with the ethics of their professions.

ONLY 4 STATES REPORTEDLY PAY STUDENTS' FEES ABROAD

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 3 May 84 p 4

[Article by Chris Ayaeze]

[Text] ONLY four states in the federation have managed to take care of their students abroad.

The other states abandoned their wards to the vagaries and uncertainties of public and private charity in foreign countries as well as to scarce resources of the country's missions overseas.

This disclosure was made in Lagos yesterday by the Minister of Education, Alhaji Yerima Abdullahi, when he met with commissioners of education in his office.

The meeting is being held behind closed door.

Alhaji Yerima said remittance of students fees overseas called for prompt and decisive action by all state governments concerned.

This, he went on, would go a long way to improve the image of the country which was being tarnished abroad over non-payment of fees.

He noted that Nigerian students as well as our missions were being subjected to great deal of embarrassment and untold hardship.

Issues to be deliberated upon at the commissioner's meeting included:

- Defraying expenses incurred on behalf of state governments by our missions overseas;
- Settling all outstanding bills of bona-fide students sponsored by state governments and
- Streamlining the administration of all the scholarship programmes overseas with a view to preserving our national identity and unity.

CSO: 3400/957

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PLANS 10-POINT REVIVAL PACKAGE

Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 7 Apr 84 pp 1, 5

[Text] A 10-POINT comprehensive package designed to revive the economy has been announced by the Federal Military Government.

General Muhammadu Buhari who released the package in Lagos last night in a special broadcast remarked that the country's economy was, in "pretty bad shape".

The government was faced with a vast external and internal debt. As at February 29 this year, total internal loans were N26.1 billion while external debt was N7.2 billion.

The 10-point measures, government has adopted to revive the economy are:

--A review of the budget to reflect the realities of the present situation. Expenditure will be matched, as much as possible, to available resources to avoid the phenomenon of excessive deficit budgetting which plagued the civilian administration. Federal and state government recurrent and capital budgets will be equally and similarly treated. Waste in any shape or form will be cut to the barest minimum.

--A programme for Nigeria's external financing requirements in 1984 is being drawn up. Major government projects involving large foreign exchange commitment will be rephased to reduce pressure on the external sector. The present control of external borrowings by state governments and other public agencies will be tightened.

--Several measures have been instituted through the Central Bank of Nigeria to streamline banking operations, reduce the rate of drain on the economy and lay a sound foundation for the control of economic financial transactions.

Thus--Commercial and merchant banks are now responsible for issuing the Form M certificate which provides for the mandatory registration of imports.

Initial problems on the issue of Form M by banks have been overcome.

--Basic Travel Allowance has been reduced to ₦100 as a short-term means of checking its abuse and improving upon the country's balance of payments position.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is taking urgent steps to combat the menace of multiple passports.

No foreign exchange will be made available to any new student who intends to study abroad. However, genuine students who have previously been granted foreign exchange to start their courses will be allowed to receive foreign exchange to complete their studies provided that their applications are accompanied with adequate documentation including an authentic letter from a Nigerian embassy high commission in the country in which the student is studying confirming that the student is in a recognised educational institution.

--Foreign exchange will be made available for postgraduate courses on sponsorship by government etc. provided such courses are not obtainable in Nigerian universities.

--In view of the envisaged increase in the burden of external debt servicing in 1984, additional borrowing beyond what is needed to pay existing arrears of foreign debts will not be undertaken until a substantial increase in the country's balance of payments is achieved.

--The economy will be diversified to reduce overdependence on petroleum as the main source of foreign exchange and government revenue. The export potential of agriculture, liquified material gas, petro-chemicals and iron and steel will be exploited.

--Local industries will be revived. Adequate attention will be given to industrial raw materials in allocating available foreign exchange. Import licences have been issued on an emergency basis to companies with facilities for, and experience of, distribution on a nationwide basis for essential raw materials which are urgently needed.

--Incentives to encourage the utilisation of local inputs will be granted to local and foreign investors to stimulate industrial development.

--Industrial joint ventures will be encouraged.

CSO: 3400/957

ABUJA PURGES TO BE FEWER THAN PLANNED

Kaduna THE DEMOCRAT WEEKLY in English 15 Apr 84 pp 1, 14

[Article by Lindsay Barrett]

[Text] ABUJA--The long-awaited pronouncement on the purge of staff and other matters in Abuja came as something of an anti-climax earlier this week when the Minister of Federal Capital Territory, Major-General Mamman Jiya Vatsa held a series of face-to-face meetings with the press. The announcement that only 275 people were to be affected by the present phase of the purges elicited surprise from some of the journalists present at the minister's press conference on Tuesday morning.

In a pre-recorded appearance on the NTA Abuja programme Hot Seat on Tuesday evening, General Vatsa was at pains to explain what he felt was the difference between "retrenchment" and disciplinary dismissal of staff. According to him he has tried to avoid retrenching people on the general principle of redundancy. He believed that the majority of the people working in the ministry and its sub-units could be effectively re-deployed but those who have been affected by the purge are those whose records showed gross acts of dishonesty, or an inability to carry out their duties properly.

Gen. Vatsa was pressed on this issue very seriously both in his press conference and on television to the point where questions arose over the criteria of selection used to decide who should be removed. Some questioners asserted that there were accusations that members of certain tribal groups were being persecuted in the exercise. Replying to this charge, the minister described such allegations as "the whipping child" of Nigerians who are caught in such exercises because of their unsatisfactory performance. In the press conference he grew slightly angry at the allegation to the point where he became personal in his reply when he said: "I am from the North and my wife is from the South. I can assure you that I have never used tribalism as a criterion for anything that I do.

The television questioners also went to town on this issue. They wished to know whether the minister's figures took into consideration the actual financial commitments, including outstanding debts, of the ministry.

General Vasta's then indicated that a total of some N200 million was owed to contractors up to the period ending December 31, 1983, and that these debts were being scrutinised to ensure that only genuine claims were paid.

General Vasta's press conference generated some heated comments from the pressmen on the question of the purges in spite of the minister's recurrent insistence that he had closed the issue. This persistence on the part of the press finally led to the minister's revealing some tantalising details of the methods used in carrying out the exercise. According to General Vatsa after various allegations were raised by a committee made up of officers who had never served in Abuja some of the affected people were called in private and actually brought face-to-face with their accusers. It was only after a thorough and cautious scrutiny of the final reports based on this exercise, General Vatsa said, that the drastically reduced list which had originally included over 500 names was approved for action.

CSO: 3400/957

TEXTILE INDUSTRY FACES BLEAK FUTURE

Lagos BUSINESS TIMES in English 7 May 84 p 24

[Article by Dapo Ajibola]

[Text] TEXTILE industry in Nigeria might be forced to close down in a few weeks time. This is because the Federal Military Government has up to now not issued import licences to the textile mills despite the fact that the Nigerian Cotton Board has asked the government to allow importation of this before the end of April, according to the chairman of the Nigerian Textile Manufacturers Association, Mr. Olubunmi Ilo.

In a letter to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry through the Ministry of Agriculture, the Board said, inter alia: "as the Board's Cotton lint is likely to be exhausted by the end of April, we request that you please give urgent attention to enable licences to be issued to the mills under the Approved Users Scheme for the importation in order to avoid problems that may arise due to lack of raw materials".

Earlier, the Board had confirmed the availability of 75,000 bales of cotton lint to the mills and to supplement this the Board now asks for import licences to be issued by the Federal Government to cover 264,816 bales of cotton lint, which is only 50 per cent of the shortfall in the mills.

Speaking to the Business Times, Mr. Ilo said that the nonavailability of cotton lint to the mills now is the last blow for an already battered industry.

The closure of the mills will come one after the other any moment from now because most of them have cotton lint that would not last more than one week, and over 200,000 employees will be out of jobs, he said.

The nineteen leading textile mills in the country had submitted in a batch their applications for licences via the Association and the cotton Board to the Federal Government having in mind the magnitude of having demand that will be made on the mills this year.

With the cotton Board's supply ability standing at 75,000 bales the textile mills would need as much as 530,000 bales to be able to produce between 400 and 500 million metres of textiles. In the meantime, the Association had decided to accept the financial commitment which is ₦20,000 in the campaign for increased cotton farming in the northern parts of the country for the 1984 season.

STEPS TO COUNTER IMPACT OF DROUGHT

Kaduna THE DEMOCRAT WEEKLY in English 15 Apr 84 pp 1, 14

[Text] MANY states, especially in the northern parts of the country, have embarked on intensive measures to check the menace of drought and its ravaging effects on agriculture this farming season.

Some of the effected states have launched appeal funds to finance their anti-drought efforts; some are increasing the use of fertilizers and pesticides to improve crop production while others have sought expert aid from within and outside the country to tackle the scourge.

One of the worst-hit states, Kano, will soon distribute large quantities of improved seeds to farmers. These species which mature earlier than the conventional type are known to survive harsh weather conditions such as the dryness caused by drought.

Our correspondent Shehu Dauda reports that as part of the effort to check the effects of drought government has embarked on a wide campaign to make farmers plant as wearily as possible, particularly during the first rains of the season.

An official of the state Ministry of Agriculture said that desert encroachment is being vigorously checked through systematic afforestation. At the same time, the government plans to establish large demonstration farms to encourage rural farmers.

The war against drought is spear-headed by three separate government agencies working in concert. These are the Hadejia-Jamaare River Basin Development Authority, Kano State Agricultural Development Project and State Ministry of Agriculture.

From Maiduguri, Ibrahim Musa Biu writes: The Borno State Commissioner for Agriculture, Malam Mahmood Lawan says that despite the losses suffered by the state as a result of drought during the last planting season, the state government is unable to do anything at present to alleviate the sufferings of affected farmers.

According to Malam Mahmood, the major hitch is lack of funds with which to provide supplementary feeds for animals, fertilizers and seeds and repair tractors in preparation for the rainy season.

He disclosed that the Agriculture Ministry is waiting for the new budget to be out before it can take any positive steps to assist affected farmers.

Nearly ₦1 billion worth of crops and livestock was lost in the state during the last planting season.

No less than 30 per cent of the cattle population, which is about 600,000 heads of cattle are affected out of which more than 300,000 are likely to die due to lack of fodder and water, according to estimates by experts.

According to the state commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Alhaji O. B. Mohammed the state government is making plans to assist the drought victims and save the few animals through provision of supplementary feeds.

Water will be carried by tankers to areas of water shortage and wells will be dug in several places to increase water supply.

The commissioner enumerated three other measures which the state government would be pursuing to combat the effect of drought. These are:

---Construction of small earth dams and the medium-sized dams all over the state to conserve rainwater for livestock and human consumption;

---Establishment of fodder production units to ensure that enough fodder is available for cattle, especially during the dry season, and

---Proper management of existing grazing and forest reserves to ensure control of use.

Daniel Tifato who studied the situation in Kaduna state filed this report:

As the rainy season approaches, the Kaduna state government is intensifying efforts to provide relief materials to parts of the state that were badly affected by drought.

The government notes that because of the early cessation of rainfall in the 1983 season, Kaduna state lost about 1.5 million tonnes of food and cash crops including livestock.

To alleviate the suffering of badly affected people in the state the government has despatched 10 water tankers to the northern part of the state.

When the state government launched the emergency Drought Relief Appeal Fund recently, more than ₦600,000 was realised. The state Drought Relief Committee has taken the campaign to the local government areas of the state.

Already, the government has started selling fertilizer to farmers throughout the state. It explains that this is being done to enable farmers begin cultivation early. This way, farmers will be able to harvest their crops in time to avoid any early cessation of rainfall.

Adds Obiora Moneke: The Kaduna state Ministry of Water Resources has purchased a heavy well drilling machine to help in the fight against drought.

It will be used in probing the earth and sucking up water from far depths, as water levels in Kaduna's major dams and rivers are said to have drastically dropped, while ordinary boreholes, wells and streams have dried up.

Austin Iyashere reporting from Minna stated that about N300 million was lost, to drought by peasant farmers in Niger state last year.

Hardest hit crops were rice, guinea corn and yams where crop failures between 50 per cent and 70 per cent were recorded in the northern parts of the state. Livestock also suffered severely due to shortage of drinking water.

The State Commissioner for Agriculture, Alhaji Nuhu Bawa, made these revelations at an interview.

CSO: 3400/957

DROUGHT REPORTEDLY CAUSED CROP LOSSES

Blantyre DAILY TIMES in English 30 Apr 84 p 11

[Text] NIGERIA's northern states, which lie on the fringes of the Sahel region, have suffered devastating crop-losses due to drought, a report by the government's meteorological office says.

The report, made available to REUTERS, said some crops like rice were wiped out while cash crops like cotton and groundnuts yielded less than 20 per cent of the expected crop.

The losses are expected to run into hundreds of millions of kwacha following the drought which struck last year when the rains arrived late and ended early when crops were ripening.

The report did not include details of losses of animal herds but said the lack of water and fodder for the important cattle herds of the north had made deep inroads.

It says that in the northeastern states of Borno, Gongola and parts of Bauchi, the 1983/84 rice crop produced no grain at all, leaving only straw to be harvested.

Some 85 per cent of the maize crop, 95 per cent of groundnuts and millet, 75 per cent of the sorghum crop and 50 per cent of vegetables were lost to the drought.

The important cotton crop, around which a significant textile industry has grown up in Nigeria, produced only 15 per cent of the expected yield.--REUTER

CSO: 3400/996

SCARCITY OF CEMENT CALLED CAUSE OF RISE IN PRICES

Enugu DAILY STAR in English 21 Apr 84 p 1

[Text] THERE is now a big cement racket at the Nigerian Cement Factory, Nkalagu, as a result, a bag of cement now costs N15 at the local market.

According to our reporter who visited Nkalagu to investigate the reason for the high cost of cement, the racket began as a result of serious bottle-neck created by the defunct civilian administration, following direct purchase of cement by only a few privileged persons in the party and government, who then re-sold the allocation to them to distributors.

Our reporter said that although the privileged buyers only had the coupons with which to pay and carry cement which sells at N4.50 at the factory, these privileged ones merely sold these coupons to traders.

If a man was allocated 10,000 bags of cement by the coupon for example, he collects N10,000 from the trader whom he had sold the coupon. The trader on his part adds N1.50 or more to cover his own profit and transportation. In the market, the consumer then pays between N7 to N8 for a bag.

In the last two months however, the price of cement has risen so tremendously that construction works has been stranded all over the country, because importation of foreign cement which used to complement the local production has ceased and importers have not got the new licence to bring in cement.

Our reporter gathered that the cement factories in Ogun, Bendel, Penue and Cross River States are not meeting the local demand.

Thus, the scarcity of cement has led to increase in price and to racketeering at NIGERCEN.

The price of NIGERCEN cement remains at N4.50 factory price, but costs N15 in the market.

Sources close to the Nkalagu Cement Factory said that the factory has been facing a lot of difficulties in obtaining foreign exchange for its raw materials.

Meanwhile, cement dealers in Nigeria have appealed to both the federal and state governments to issue them licences which would enable them import cement. They also appealed to the governments to give directive for direct purchase of cement from cement industries in the country.

One of them said, "without cement at a reasonable price, people cannot build, and if cement is few in the market, it will be sold only to a privileged few who would become rich by it".

CSO: 3400/996

BRIEFS

TIMES EDITOR FREED--The Editor of DAILY TIMES, Mr. Martin Iroabuchi and one of his reporters, Mr. Isa Abu, have been cautioned and discharged in a contempt case by an Ikeja High Court. Discharging the men yesterday, the High Court Judge, Mr. Justice W. Ajao Oshodi, said he had taken into consideration the plea of the defence counsel. He noted that the defendants have also complied with his orders in an affidavit, adding that apologies as ordered had been published. Before the court's decision, counsel to the editor and the reporter, Mr. Tony Momoh, referred to his earlier pleas and pointed out that the DAILY TIMES newspapers had complied with the court order. [Excerpt] [Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 7 Apr 84 p 5]

OUSTED GOVERNOR'S WIFE ARRESTED--THE wife of the ousted Governor of Imo State, Mrs. Victoria Mbakwe, and two directors of the controversial LAVAM project were on Tuesday whisked away to Lagos by security men. The others are the former director of the LAVAM Children's Project, Louis Onwunali and the secretary, the Rev. T. N. A. Odoemelam. Mrs. Mbakwe and the two directors were seen at the offices of the NSO, Owerri on Tuesday before they were taken to Lagos. The reason for their arrest was not immediately known but it is known that the Imo State Military Government recently set up a judicial commission of inquiry, headed by a high court judge, Mr. Justice Sunday Chiana Kwalam, to probe the activities of the LAVAM Children's Project. [By Shirley Peter Kalio] [Excerpt] [Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 12 Apr 84 p 32]

MAITATSINE 'FOLLOWERS' HELD--NINE persons suspected to be members of the proscribed Maitatsine sect, fleeing from law enforcement agents in Bauchi State, have been arrested at the Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano. They were arrested on Thursday night, in their hide-out in the premises of the airport, ready to find their way to Jedda, in Saudi Arabia. According to Mr. M. Chibok, the Public Relations Officer of the Nigeria Airports Authority, the activities of the arrested suspects had been under surveillance for sometime because of the way they always avoided other airport users. Mr. Chibok said that more credence was lent to security fears, when the suspects finally settled down in an inconspicuous and remote area in the airport rather than use the departure lounge of the airport like other travellers. The PRO told the Daily Times that their arrest was finally made after their passports were examined and found to have been issued only on February 20, this year, at Yola. The men also had in their possession a strange Arabic writing and documents, which intelligence men were busy translating to find out if they were messengers of some sort or

otherwise. The question security men were trying to find answers to was: "Who issued passports to the suspects a-month-and-a-half after the Federal Government had put a ban on the issuance of passports to Nigerians until further notice? [By Ide Equabor] [Text] [Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 17 Apr 84 p 24]

FRAUD AT UNIVERSITY--TWO former executives of the Bendel State University, Ekpoma have been ordered to explain how N40,000 withdrawn from the coffers of the institution was spent within five days. The governor, Brigadier J. T. Useni also ordered the two men, Professor M. I. Ogbeide and Mr. S. A. Kakulu to stop parading themselves as vice chancellor and registrar of the university respectively. Brigadier Useni gave the order at the week-end in Benin while interrogating the two former executives on the withdrawal of the N40,000. Professor Ogbeide, who admitted being in possession of the university's typewriter was also ordered by the Governor to return same immediately or face severe penalty. Governor Useni said the state government reserved the right to relieve anybody of his appointment when his services were no longer required. He added that it was wrong for any person to impose himself or herself on the government. [By Phillip Ahante] [Text] [Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 23 Apr 84 p 1]

282 GHOST WORKERS--TWO hundred and eighty two ghost workers were identified in government ministries and parastatals in Bauchi State during the month of March this year. Following this discovery, N71,310 which would have been paid to the ghost workers was saved by the government. This was revealed to newsmen at the weekend by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Dr. Ismaila Mika Jimeta. Dr. Jimeta also stated that 461 workers could not claim their March salaries as some of them were believed to be on course or yearly leave. According to the Permanent secretary, the Ministry of Education topped the list with 93 ghost workers, while the Ministry of Health had 41 and the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources had 40. [Text] [Lagos DAILY TIMES in English 30 Apr 84 p 5]

BANNING PILGRIMAGES URGED--THE Federal Military Government has been called upon to place a temporary ban on all forms of holy pilgrimage until the economy of the nation improves. Speaking to a group of journalists at a bazaar held at the National Museum Onikan, Lagos, by the Association of Women Bankers, Alhaji S. A. Sule, President of the Nigeria Institute of Bankers decried the huge sum of foreign exchange being expended on pilgrims. Commenting on the Federal Government's announcement that Nigerian pilgrims would be allowed to exchange N800 for this year's pilgrimage, Alhaji Sule said 'if about one million pilgrims were allowed to go on pilgrimage, it means that a colossal sum of N80 million would be involved. He described such expenditure as wasteful and an expensive luxury the country could not afford at this hard times. Alhaji Sule who had pioneered the call to ban the importation of rice into the country said that another area of wasteful disbursement of scarce foreign exchange included the importation of fertilizer. He said there were large expanse of fertile lands in the country that would be cultivated to ensure adequate food for the masses. [Text] [Enugu DAILY STAR in English 21 Apr 84 p 8]

5 'MAITATSINE BEHEADINGS'--AT LEAST five people have been beheaded in Bauchi by people suspected to be followers of the banned Maitatsine religious sect. Three bodies were picked up last week Thursday, at the Railway quarters while two headless bodies were recovered by the police early Friday morning at Kofar Ran, opposite the Triumph Office in Bauchi. Speculations are rife that the Maitatsine followers, who are on the run from Yola, will strike at Bauchi anytime from now. There were strong fears they might strike today. Meanwhile, the Nigerian Police has intensified night and day patrols to round up all suspects. Already 100 suspects mainly aliens, have been arrested by the police. Police sources declined to confirm whether they suspect any religious fanaticism in the recent spate of killings. This reporter was simply told investigation was going on. Following this development, fear has gripped the entire civilian population of Bauchi. Last Friday morning, I noticed a frantic rush at the various motor parks as many families were seen sending their children to various locations in and outside the state. [By Ocapa Ogenyi] [Text] [Kano SUNDAY TRIUMPH in English 25 Mar 84 p 1]

'GHOST' PROJECTS IN BENUE--How was the sum of N1,264,103m spent by the former civilian regime in Benue State for a project that never took off? This is the question that the new military administration in the state is trying to find an answer to in its on-going clean-up exercise to recover ill-gotten wealth from the ousted politicians. Investigations revealed that the Benue state Commissioner for Trade and Industry in the defunct civilian government withdrew public money in the name of some 'ghost' projects that were not in existence or at least had no physical evidence of existence. One of such projects is the N21m Benue Asbestos Company which did not exist but for which over N1m was withdrawn by some government officials in the company's name. [By Samson Namo] [Excerpt] [Kano SUNDAY TRIUMPH in English 25 Mar 84 p 1]

CSO: 3400/966

PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FORMED WITH TANZANIA

Kampala UGANDA TIMES in English 4 May 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Eva Lubwama and Tom B. Okello]

[Text] THE Uganda Parliament on Wednesday passed a motion calling for the formation of the Uganda-Tanzania Parliament Association. The purpose of the association is to promote the exchange of legislative-economic and cultural information between the two sister republics.

The association will also enhance the recently formed joint Economic Commission between the two nations.

Tabling the motion, the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Mr Osindek Wangwor, said Tanzania has a lot to share with Uganda despite the fact the has a one-party system

He added that the door was open for other neighbouring countries to associate with Uganda at parliamentary level.

Mr Wangwor emphasised the importance of parliament as an organ of any understanding between the people of the two nations.

Through the association, joint seminars on different topics will be held, while reciprocal visits by members of parliament, as well as exchange of literature especially the hansard will be encouraged, he added.

Mr Wangwor assured the House the running of the association will not require a separate vote of funds and its expenditure will be minimal.

He outlined that already, Uganda Parliament is a member of many international parliamentary organs and it was therefore proper to establish parliamentary links with her immediate neighbours.

Supporting the motion, the Minister of Justice, Mr Steven Ariko, said that Ugandan parliamentarians should not forget that it was the Tanzanian parliament's go ahead for the liberation war which brought peace and democracy to this nation.

Opposing the motion, the Opposition Chief Whip, Mr Ojok Mulozi argued that the motion had been too much rushed through.

This, he said, was a good sign from the Tanzanian Parliament, despite the fact that there was no parliament in Uganda then.

The gesture of Tanzanian Parliament, he added, made it possible for parliament to exist again in Uganda.

Parliament has been adjourned indefinitely.

CSO: 3400/987

BRIEFS

ACCUSATION OF STARVING PRISONERS--Two Democratic Party officials who have been held in Rubongi for the last month or so are being starved to death, according to a press release issued by the National Publicity Secretary of the Democratic Party Hon. Ojok-Mulozi. According to the release, one of the three prisons who were still being held was released recently. He was named as Fabian Ouma while those still held under black diet were named as Joseph Wabwire and Paul Mangeni. It will be recalled that eight D.P. leaders of Tororo South were arrested on 17/3/84 by police on the instigation of the UPC leadership in the area and transferred to Rubongi Barracks (Tororo) where they were detained. Five of them were released shortly afterwards. The Democratic Party apart from informing the government, police, and military authorities about these false detentions, issued two earlier Press releases, to expose a typical case of how many Ugandans find themselves in torture places. [Text] [Kampala MURNANSI in English 12 Apr 84 p 16]

TOURISM PROGRAM--THE Acting Senior Public Relations Officer of Uganda Airlines corporation, Mr J. L. Bigirwa said yesterday in Kampala that the corporation had recently launched "an organised holiday tour programme" aimed at boosting tourism in the country. [Excerpt] [Kampala UGANDA TIMES in English 4 May 84 p 8]

CSO: 3400/987

YAMEOGO MAKES SELF-CRITICISM, DISCUSSES KI-ZERBO ACTIVITIES

Ouagadougou L'OBSERVATEUR in French 19 Mar 84 pp 7,8,9,12

[First installment of interview with Maurice Yameogo, former president of Upper Volta, by Ouatomou Lamien, in Bourkina Province, 17 Mar 84]

[Text] First it was announced on National Radio on 17 March 1983 [as published] at noon. Then the news spread like wildfire and was on everyone's lips: "Maurice Yameogo is going to speak at 2000." And 2000 came. After the radio's first evening news, it invited the audience to listen to an interview by National Radio's director general, Ouatomou Lamien, with the Republic of Upper Volta's first president who is in internment in Po. Given the length of the interview, which we have transcribed, we are publishing only one part of it today.

[Question] Do you mind if I call you Mr President, inasmuch as you were the top political leader on the national level after the start of the 1960's and even well before then.

So, I will allow myself to call you Mr President. We are going to have this discussion, which will perhaps last quite some time, in order to avail ourselves of the opportunity to profit from your experience as chief of state and also from your experience as a man who during a certain time has remained outside historical developments in Upper Volta and who has, therefore, been able to follow developments in our country's history. And nowadays you are in Po in circumstances which people are generally aware of, and I think that you have pondered a great deal over the history of our country. It is in that context that we want to start our discussion, and the first question that arises is: how do you assess the 4 August Revolution experience? It has already been a number of months since 4 August, and you have been able to follow things. How do you assess this experience that is being led by the young men who want to give our country back some confidence and honor?

[Answer] I thank you very much. Clearly we have come a very long way. We would certainly need a lot more time to consider things from all angles. But I should tell you straight off that in Po, where I have been interned for . . . it will soon be 4 months and some days, I have had the opportunity and the spare time to listen to the young men in power, to observe their movement in the direction of very determined revolutionary renewal, and I must tell you that every day we follow with pleasure their voluble attentiveness to things.

Because I was the first president I ought to first off assess the difference, as far as I am concerned, that there is between today's revolutionary government and the government over which I had the opportunity to preside right after the African states became independent.

Firstly, we didn't have any problem. One might say that we launched headlong into the fray. Well, any government structure first of all presupposes the safety of the nation, but when making the comparison with what is happening today, one might say that these young men are much further along than we were in the direction of organization and positive struggle motivated by the will to be free, dignified, and independent. I must say that in record time--for the revolutionary government hasn't been in place for more than 5 or 6 months--our seemingly sleepy country has been roused. Although I don't physically observe it from up close, one feels that the country is alive, that Upper Volta has at various levels practically become a huge work site. I know that the people are easily making the comparison between what was yesterday and what is today.

All one has to do is see the voluntary, enthusiastic achievements being accomplished every day in order to know that there is really a change and that we who are of a certain era and are getting on in years must resolutely trust these young men. And at the same time we must thank them. Thank them for having brought us out of discredit by taking this direction . . .

Thank them for having shown, through rallying such amazing energies, that Upper Volta is not completely down the drain . . .

But never mind. I am convinced that in the end it is they who will be right. In order to make a success of our revolution all that must be done is show that we want to make a success of it together. Doubtless this could be accomplished by individuals in isolated fashion, but that would not be ideal. That is why in terms of myself I have decided to break silence and in case I'm needed appear before the people of Bourkina and explain my position. If I made errors in the past, let me be told about them and I'll acknowledge them and ask . . . Anyway, if you don't mind I'll give you an idea of what I intend to say to my fellow countrymen:

"Permit your first chief of state, who had the privilege of ushering in the era of the successive reactionary governments, to take a quick general look with you at the different factors which, at least as far as I am concerned, have contributed to what is nowadays appropriately called national resignation.

Comrades of Bourkina Province, I have come to talk with you voluntarily. My situation of being a political detainee in Po--where I am treated wonderfully well, moreover; you can see--might allow one to think that some pressure were in some way or other being exerted on me. There is nothing of the kind. I have come to try to convince you, by means of sincere and loyal self-criticism, that in spite of the burdensome presumptions people have had about me it has never entered my head to choose a side which was not your side. Well, you have chosen to champion the Revolution of 4 August 1983, at all costs, for the purpose of establishing a new society in which justice for all is the permanent creed of those who conceived that historic day. How could it be otherwise for me, the man who attempted, during a certain era, to lead Upper Volta along the very same track, which attempt soon ended up in failure for lack of appropriate logistical means . . . The situation I am experiencing today does not basically surprise me. In my opinion it is the result of a vast number of precautions to be taken aimed at meeting objectives which for any budding revolution require assurance of maximum security in order to radically fire up and enhance the stature of the entire nation. That--I understand it very well--requires temporarily imprisoning all former leaders, who are potential leaders, whether they are opposed to this revolution or not.

CDR [Committee for the Defense of the Revolution] comrades of Bourkina Province: it is in response to the opportunity afforded each person to climb onto the Revolution bandwagon, even if that bandwagon is already in motion, that I come today to speak to you with words full, as you can well imagine, of meaningful emotion, and convinced that after having heard me out from beginning to end you will agree to my being reintegrated in a trusted and activist fashion into the great revolutionary family of Bourkina Province which saw my birth and my growing up without ever offending anyone."

If I have been keen on providing you a general idea of what I intend to say, it was by way of telling you after a fashion that the question you asked me called for my giving you that introductory outline. But I must tell you as well that time has also done its work, and I am in a position to answer any specific question that you are led to ask me, because I knowingly and deeply support the Revolution of 4 August 1983. Because basically it is bringing us out of discredit, and that is what should have been done from the very start.

[Question] There is one item which certainly must receive your support, which is the struggle that the present authorities and the Upper Voltan people intend to carry out against any foreign domination. At the present time Upper Volta cares a great deal about its honor, and I believe that from the time your government began by your refusing foreign base and particularly French base installation in Upper Volta you were one of the few African chiefs of state to do so. I think that on this matter of defense and the dignity of our people, you certainly must agree with the present CNR [National Council of the Revolution].

[Answer] Absolutely. Absolutely, especially since at the very start of Upper Voltan independence we didn't have the same logistical means to effectively fight and assert our independence, as I was saying just now. But I am very happy to observe that the Revolution of 4 August 1983 is making improvements in terms of what I personally, as the first chief of state, had had sight of--from the standpoint of giving the independence and dignity of our people an official character--without being able to accomplish.

So I am saying that by their doing this the authorities have in practice redeemed me, and I need only follow their lead in order for our independence to be affirmed. You see, when I told the military bases not to stay here it was because I was aware that they were one day liable to jeopardize our independence. At the time I was much criticized, I was called conceited, etc. . . . But I assumed my responsibilities. And I believe that history has borne me out, because if it were otherwise many problems with the 4 August 1983 Revolution actually becoming effective would have emerged at the present time. But since God does things well . . . we needed a guard, an orderly in the nursery of independence in order for his best children, who were being molded in military schools, to come at a precise moment and affirm that independence, by taking up the challenge that their old father had not had a wrong view of. So I agree with them completely, and it is paradoxical that people, groups and individuals, could question the policy of independence established for the CNR, as they do according to what we hear. Because there exists a will to assert genuine independence as something inalienable given to each nation. And each nation has the right to choose the society it likes. It just has to know how to organize itself and make that society be effective and benefit the nation, as I have the impression will be the case. While the abovementioned people may be more or less shaken up for that purpose now, history will show that they were wrong, and they will be covered with shame.

[Question] On that point, as you in fact know a certain number of Upper Voltans seem not to appreciate this policy of national independence. Some of them have fled the country. You are acquainted with them in their capacity as politicians since you have had to cross swords, as it were, with them. I

mean political officials such as Ki-Zerbo--he is abroad at present--, who are accused of carrying out a certain number of activities for the purpose of jeopardizing what the CNR intends to do nowadays. Well, you know the man; does this surprise you?

[Answer] It doesn't surprise me at all that Ki-Zerbo is abroad. Because all you have to do is observe that at the time of each coup d'etat which has taken place in Upper Volta he has always been outside the country, but with one foot back inside, while he waits for everything to be all over so he can come back and get his slice of the cake. But this time it is much more serious because, knowing Ki-Zerbo as I know him, his need to make a conquest of the government is so deeply fixed in his head that he is capable of anything. But he is not able to do anything; I know him. He is currently outside the country, and what he is is a big talker. But people who can do worthwhile work and can question this or that stand of the CNR should not be outside the country. They should be here, in order for dialogue to get underway in a loyal, brotherly, and revolutionary fashion between the leaders of the moment and all revolutionaries who agree to follow their program. But the fact that Joseph Ki-Zerbo has gone outside the country is not high-minded; it is suspect. Not only is it suspect, but also it is unworthy of a fine gentleman like him who says he is professor of history and geography. Besides, look--as an illustration I'm going to tell you something that many people do not know.

If Ki-Zerbo really wanted to expend his intellectual energies in the interest of Upper Volta . . . what about when he was the first African Educational District Inspector appointed by me. Instead of devoting himself to that task, he set about recruiting personnel for the MLN [National Liberation Movement] of that time. That was all the work he did . . . At a certain point I gave him the responsibility of writing an overall history of Africa. Months and months passed, and his minister at the time--it was Tamini, I believe--whom I had asked the status of it, had Ki-Zerbo come to a cabinet meeting to explain. Ki-Zerbo said to me: "No, I don't want any suspicions like that . . . the money came to my account; it's still there . . .". He thought I suspected him of having embezzled the money he had been given.

In 1963 when I carried out my ministerial reshuffle--Consider this well! This is something people don't know, even the people in his circle don't know it, and it shows his bad faith.--I called him and I told him: "Come into the government. I'll offer you the office of minister of state in charge of ministerial coordination. Being in the middle of things you will show what you're capable of." He asked me for three days to think it over. Meanwhile, he sent somebody else to tell me that after reflection "he preferred to wait; it was not the right time." I subsequently understood that in his intimate circle the people were not officially informed about this, and he was said to have stated that the fruit was sufficiently ripe to fall by itself. This was 1963. The fruit ripened so much that it has become green, for he waited

until 3 January 1966 for Maurice to leave and he still isn't chief of state. This is by way of telling you in passing that Ki-Zerbo is so anxious for power that he is capable of the worst foolishness. For people who are really honest want to put their intelligence at the country's service. They are here; they haven't fled. Myself, ever since that time I could have left. I knew what could happen to me one day or other. And starting on that 3 January people made proposals to me about going to all kinds of places. But I said no, I am going to die here. What have I done? I have stayed; I am here. And I am even doing quite all right. Awaiting the time when the activities of all and sundry are cleared up. I am here, faithful to what the 4 August revolutionaries have marked out, and, if I have the opportunity and I still have a few years of life remaining, one day I will be able to make my small contribution, for the purpose of our country's moving ever forward. And that is a deep-seated plan which lies within me. That is why I am happy you asked me this question. As for the Ki-Zerbo's, they have not done the right thing. Thanks to them, certain people here are under suspicion . . . and I am sure that the Ki-Zerbo's are making a lot of fuss out there. Even if they are earning money it is just to live on, that's all. No mercenary is going to come here; don't worry.

At one time I heard that my personal relations with Houphouet were being interpreted as more or less (The journalist broke in here and said that he was going to come to this issue.) the sort which would permit Ivory Coast to shelter some kinds of mercenaries who might make their way into Upper Volta at any time, and I said, "Sir, that's not true." That is a misunderstanding of Houphouet and a misunderstanding of the basis of our friendship. I know Houphouet. It is because there was a clash at the beginning that he had to react the way he did, but it is certain that one day Sankara and he will be the best of friends.

[Question] To get back to Ki-Zerbo, you accused him just now of several things; he refused to get involved, as it were. One might say that under the CMRPN [Military Committee of Recovery for National Progress] he did, however, make some progress since it ultimately seems (and quite a lot of facts demonstrate this) that it was his party which served as political adviser to the CMRPN government.

[Answer] Fine. Although I am saying that when he was faced with the proposal I personally made him he was above accepting it, that doesn't mean that he didn't continue to engage in chicanery to make preparations with other military governments, which were virtually made up from among his men, in order to be able, when all was said and done, to succeed in his aims. One might say that the CMRPN government was practically a Ki-Zerbo government. He was the one giving the orders. I know, because everything gets to be known in Upper Volta. When he used to go to Saye Zerbo's at one in the morning he would leave at three or four. What was he doing that whole time? He was giving orders. And everything is known; the people saw him go back in and leave. There are guards there; we have relatives there. Well, that government was his. And I don't want to make needless denunciations. There have been rumors, but this is confirmed. I have learned that when Saye was to make an official visit to France, Ki-Zerbo had been asked to go in advance and wait there. At the end of that visit a first step was to be taken in the process of transferring authority to Ki-Zerbo by his being named Saye Zerbo's prime minister. This is not "fiction." It is fact. Just his luck; that official visit didn't take place.

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CSO: 3419/648

UPPER VOLTA

JAPANESE ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRY DISCUSSED

Ouagadougou L'OBSERVATEUR in French 16,17,18 Mar 84 pp 10,11

[Article by Passek-Taale in the column "A Letter for Laye"]

[Excerpt] Dear Wambi,

Something appalling has happened to me. I will talk to you about it presently. In any event, that has reminded me of what Sacha Guitry said: "When you lend 10,000 francs to a friend, you lose 10,000 francs and . . . a friend."

No harm done. Let's move on.

Some documents having to do with the financing of a project for increasing food crop production in Upper Volta were signed last Friday in Ouagadougou.

According to the communique issued at the end of the signing ceremony, Japan is making available to Upper Volta in grant form a financial package of 200 million yen (about 280 million CFA francs) for the purchase and delivery of approximately 2000 tons of urea.

The communique adds that the Japanese grant is aimed at encouraging and increasing potential food crop production in Upper Volta, and it represents Japan's sixth aid intervention in Upper Volta.

According to the communique, this grant brings the sum total of Japan's assistance to Upper Volta up to 2,447 million yen (3,424 million CFA francs).

The documents were signed for Upper Volta by the interim foreign affairs minister, Interior Minister Ernest Ouedraogo, and for Japan by its ambassador in Upper Volta, Mr Joshi Kazu Suguitani.

An interministerial consultation meeting between Mali and Upper Volta has been taking place since Monday in Mopti, in the south central part of Mali.

According to Radio Mali, the consultation's goal is to strengthen the ties "of friendship and cooperation" between our country and Mali.

On Wednesday evening the Ivorian minister of national education and scientific research, Mr Balla Keita, delivered a message from Ivory Coast President Houphouet Boigny to the CNR [National Council of the Revolution] chairman and chief of state, Capt Thomas Sankara. Mr Keita was granted an audience by the chief of state, and on leaving he stated, "[words missing] stay in our country in the context of the first regular ministerial conference of the CAMES [African and Malagasy Council on Higher Education] member countries."

Mr Keita stated that the message dealt with the strengthening of the ties of friendship linking Ivory Coast and Upper Volta. He also added that Ivory Coast does not interfere in the internal affairs of other states, so it does not wish for interference in its own. For that reason it cannot serve as a base for aggression against the Upper Voltan revolution or any other country

Such is life.

See you.

Your cousin Passek-Taale.

9631

CSO: 3419/648

UPPER VOLTA

RECENT EVENTS IN COUNTRY DISCUSSED

Ouagadougou L'OBSERVATEUR in French 4,5,6 May 84 p 12

[Article by Passek-Taale in the column "A Letter for Laye"]

[Text] Dear Wambi,

". . . Lord I am tired . . . and the hill is very high that leads to their school. Make it, Lord, so I don't go there any more."

For the first of May, some people expected the former minister of civil service and labor, Mr Alexandre Zoungrana, to make amends to the Trade Union Center as the second session of the Bobo Dioulasso TPR [People's Revolutionary Tribunal] had suggested to him. As you must have learned, that show did not take place, and for good reason . . .

On the previous day some trade union members are said to have gone to the residence of the individual in question "to refresh his memory."

The gist of what Mr Zoungrana is then said to have stated is that he would not go to the Trade Union Center. First, because it was advice the Bobo Dioulasso TPR had given him and should be understood as such, and therefore not be confused with a sentence. Next, because he had had no guarantee of his safety. And finally, because he felt that if there was self-criticism to be made, it should be total, that is by the whole CMRPN [Military Committee of Recovery for National Progress] including its steering committee.

However, dear cousin, I do not know whether there exists a cause-and-effect relationship between Mr Zoungrana's refusal to go to his Canossa and his being moved out of the Civil Service Ministry as of the next day, or if that measure was written in heaven and hence inevitable before God.

Anyway . . . Let's move on to what we are certain about. What I mean is a look at the week's events on the national level.

On Wednesday 25 April 1984, Mr Abdul Hamid Mirza, vice president of the Junior International Economic Chamber, arrived in our country, visiting and encouraging the Junior Economic Chambers of the countries in his area.

He was received by the minister of commerce, industry and mines who is the sponsor of the Junior Economic Chamber of Upper Volta.

As he does every year on the eve of the first of May, the minister of civil service, labor and social security addressed a message to the world of working people. Unfortunately, dear Wambi, I was unable to get a copy of that message for you, but there's no great harm in that.

But you should know that on the morning of the first of May the CSV [Upper Voltan Trade Union Confederation] held a meeting at the Trade Union Center. The CNTV [National Confederation of Upper Voltan Workers], USTV [Upper Voltan Workers Trade Union Federation], and OVSL [Upper Voltan Organization of Free Trade Unions] trade union groupings held their meetings together that evening in the same place.

The revolutionary trade unions (SNAID [National Trade Union of Tax and Estate Agents], SYNTSHA [expansion unknown], SYNTRAGMIH [expansion unknown], SYNTER [expansion unknown], UGEV [General Union of Voltan Students]) had a meeting at the Worker Education office which was just as successful as the two abovementioned meetings.

But going beyond that, it was observed that this year the trade unions did not, as is their normal custom, celebrate the immortal day in close ranks.

Dear Wambi, you must have heard the good news announced by the last cabinet meeting having to do with a sizeable gold deposit having shown up in the Sebba region. That must have reminded you of all those well gilded tales your Uncle Kiparince used to trot out for us about the mysteries and treasures of that region. In fact he used to tell us about the gold-bearing trails that blazed and rippled at night like fabulous reptiles which only skilled panners for gold could tame.

Five years ago the news gave rise to such a stampede that the authorities had had to send to the scene a National Army detachment which, I believe, must still be there.

Such is life.

See you.

Your cousin Passek-Taale.

TRADE MINISTER ON NEED FOR GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR DIALOGUE

Harare THE HERALD in English 17 May 84 p 1

[Article by Lynda Loxton]

[Text] VICTORIA FALLS. THE Minister of Trade and Commerce, Cde Richard Hove, yesterday sharply rebuked "misdirected" members of the private sector who blamed Zimbabwe's economic ills on the Government's socialist policies.

Opening the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce's annual business forum here, Cde Hove said the main point of conflict between the Government and the private sector was that "you as members of the private sector tend to look at things from a purely economic point of view based on economic self-interest and the need to increase profits, whereas Government tries to find a balance between economic, political and social considerations".

He said businessmen frequently referred to increased State controls and the private sector "erroneously" argued that "left to their own devices, free market forces were best suited to achieve growth with equity".

"Where are their genuinely free market forces in operation? Where are their market situations nowadays which are not either distorted and/or influenced by economic, social and other currents?" asked Cde Hove.

The controls that attracted the most criticism included import, price and commercial rent controls.

Cde Hove pointed out that import controls had been and would continue to be necessary for balance of payments reasons although every effort was made to ensure that normal economic life was disrupted as little as possible and that levels of employment were not adversely affected.

For reasons largely outside the control of Government, sizeable reductions in foreign exchange allocations had been necessary and a "high degree of co-operation and careful planning between the public and private sectors 'was necessary' if we are to get through this difficult period successfully".

"Regrettably, however, when Government takes harsh but prudent measures to direct the allocation of foreign currency or to curtail the drain of foreign currency, it is saddled with misdirected accusations from the private sector of economic mismanagement.

"I must emphasise that Government is people-oriented, its policies are essentially socialist-based and it is dedicated to raising the standard of living of the mass of the people," he said.

On price controls, Cde Hove said the Government was very conscious of the need to relate prices to the ability of the people to pay for goods. While profit was not considered a dirty word by the Government, it was essential that profits should be used beneficially and not just for lining the pockets of shareholders.

"profits must be seen in the context of Government's fundamental policy of wealth-sharing. Profits should benefit the shareholder, the worker whose labour produces the profit and the people of the country as a whole," he said.

Cde Hove said earlier that his ministry had eliminated the delays in processing price increase applications.

The minister said Zimbabwe's success at international fairs and exhibitions during 1983/84 was indicated by the fact that orders received from African and overseas contacts totalled \$8.75 million.

CSO: 3400/1008

RURAL BUSINESSMEN COME CLOSER TO GETTING TITLE DEEDS FOR LAND

Harare THE HERALD in English 18 May 84 p 1

[Text] VICTORIA FALLS. THE Ministry of Local Government and Town Planning is to gazette 55 business centres in the communal lands in the "next few weeks" in its drive to help traders in these areas obtain title deeds to their land.

This was announced here this week at the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce business forum by a ministry official when she was asked what progress had been made in demarcating the business areas.

Members pointed out that the expansion and development of business in the rural areas had been hampered by the inability of members to obtain title deeds which could be used as security when applying for loans.

The official said that after the centres had been gazetted there would, however, be some delay before title deeds were granted as the sites would have to be surveyed.

Only 55 centres--one each for Zimbabwe's 55 districts--had been pinpointed out of the total 2 500 business centres in the country, because of the long process of identifying them and because of the financial squeeze on the ministry.

Of the 55 districts, 47 did not have any centre in which title deeds could be granted.

Until 1980, only 13 townships had been set aside for title deeds and little development took place in the form of essential social and economic infra-structural services. In fact, development had been ad hoc "as no good planning principles were applied".

"As a result, the ministry has to make sure that before centres are selected for granting title deeds, proper selection and planning of centres is done," she said.

"The ministry, through the department of physical planning and district councils has been working flat out to produce layout plans for growth points, district and rural service centres."

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BRIEFS

NUMBER OF CO-OPS--THERE are 1 320 registered co-operatives in Zimbabwe now with a total membership of 94 000 in agricultural, industrial, service and collective ventures, the Minister of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, Cde Moven Mahachi, said in Gaborone yesterday. Addressing the first African ministerial co-operative conference in the Botswana capital, Cde Mahachi said the Government was encouraged by the increasing number of co-operatives being formed. A new understanding was that co-operative action enabled a broadbased economic transfer that would ensure control of socio-economic institutions by the majority. Cde Mahachi said measures were being taken to ensure that dishonesty, corruption and mismanagement do not creep into the movement. "I feel confident that taping from experiences of the long established member countries of the International Co-operative Alliance, we will emerge on a fairly sound base," he said. "We are gradually getting acquainted with the ICA and I am sure we shall become a member in due course," said Cde Mahachi who attended as an observer. [Text] [Harare THE HERALD in English 12 May 84 p 3]

RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS WORKING WELL--THE resettlement programme is beginning to pay dividends and some schemes expect a bumper harvest this season, the Secretary for Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, Dr Langford Chitsike, said yesterday. He told a Commonwealth rural credit workshop in Harare that senior Government officials were due to visit schemes in Mashonaland East and West, and in the eastern districts to see for themselves. The Deputy Secretary for Agriculture, Dr Sam Muchena, asked the conference why some people thought the calibre of farmer being resettled would wreck the programme. Dr Chitsike said experience in rural areas over many years had disproved the idea that peasants cannot farm. Many co-operatives were so successful that supportive services from Government were being stretched. People who thought money was being wasted on resettlement should get their facts straight, he said. Commercial banks could invest in the communal sector if land tenure could be enacted to provide security, he said. Plans were being made for co-operative unions to gain access to financial institutions to raise money to lend to their members. The honorary secretary of the Savings Development Movement, Dr George Smith, told the workshop that savings clubs were anxiously waiting for a rural development savings bank. This would help clubs in remote areas facing steep transport costs to bank money. There are roughly 5 500 savings clubs with a family membership of 150 000 who spend \$5 million annually on inputs. The Commonwealth rural credit workshop ends today. [Text] [Harare THE HERALD in English 12 May 84 p 3]

ZAMBIA WANTS NATIONAL GOODS--BULAWAYO. BUYERS from Zambia had expressed interest in placing orders worth more than \$3 million after visiting Trade Fair stands, a spokesman for the Ministry of Trade and Commerce said yesterday. The spokesman said the six buyers had been particularly interested in building materials, mining equipment and spares, agricultural implements, and machinery. "Although no definite orders were placed, good contacts were made. Sanitaryware was another range which attracted their interest. All of them said that they were now returning to Lusaka, hopefully to make arrangements for payment agreements," he said. "Orders they would like to place would amount to more than \$3 million," he said. Two buyers from Angola had been particularly interested in canned foodstuffs, footwear, blankets, clothing, cooking utensils and carpentry materials. "They were taken to some local factories where they were impressed by the quality and range of products being made in Zimbabwe. Although no definite orders were placed the buyers said they were going back to their own country to make decisions about sales," the spokesman said. [Excerpt] [Harare THE HERALD in English 14 May 84 p 1]

RECRUITMENT OF ASIAN ELECTRICIANS--HARARE City Council may recruit staff for its electricity department from India and Pakistan to alleviate the manpower shortage, a Harare councillor said yesterday. Clr. John Zhakata, the chairman of the general purposes committee, told The Herald yesterday that the council's efforts to recruit electricians from Britain had been unsuccessful after the city electrical engineer, Mr Bruce Moore, went there twice. "We have decided to recruit from Pakistan where there are many electricians," he said. Members of the general purposes committee have been on an inspection visit of the electricity department to see how the department operates. Clr Zhakata said the electricity department was in a "chaotic situation". Last month, the Mayor of Harare, Clr Tizirayi Gwata, called for an investigation into operations of the department after councillors had got unsatisfactory answers on why electricity staff were frustrated. [Excerpts] [Harare THE HERALD in English 17 May 84 p 1]

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